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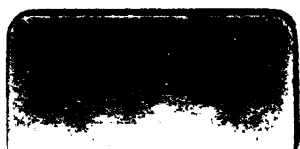
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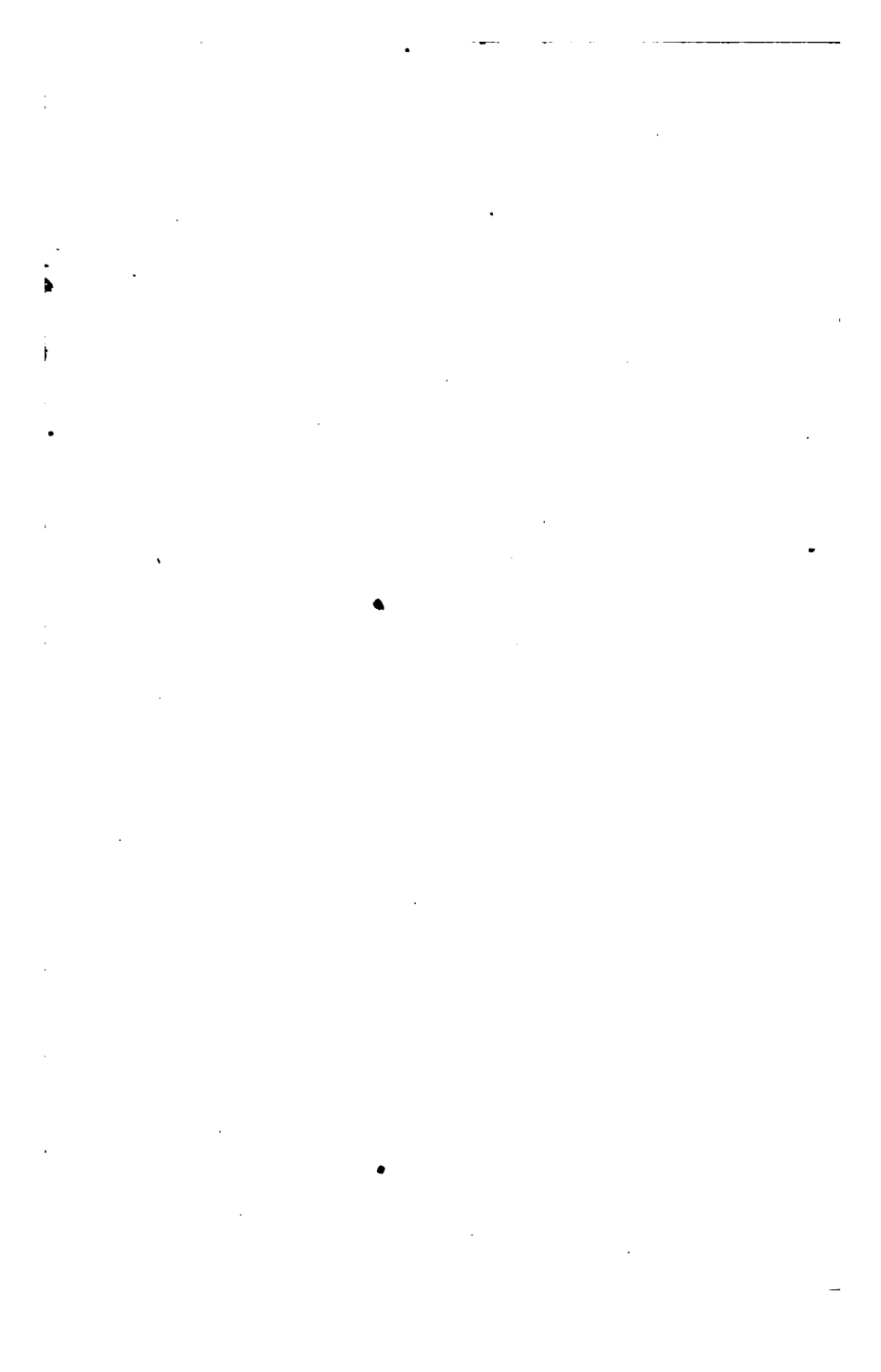
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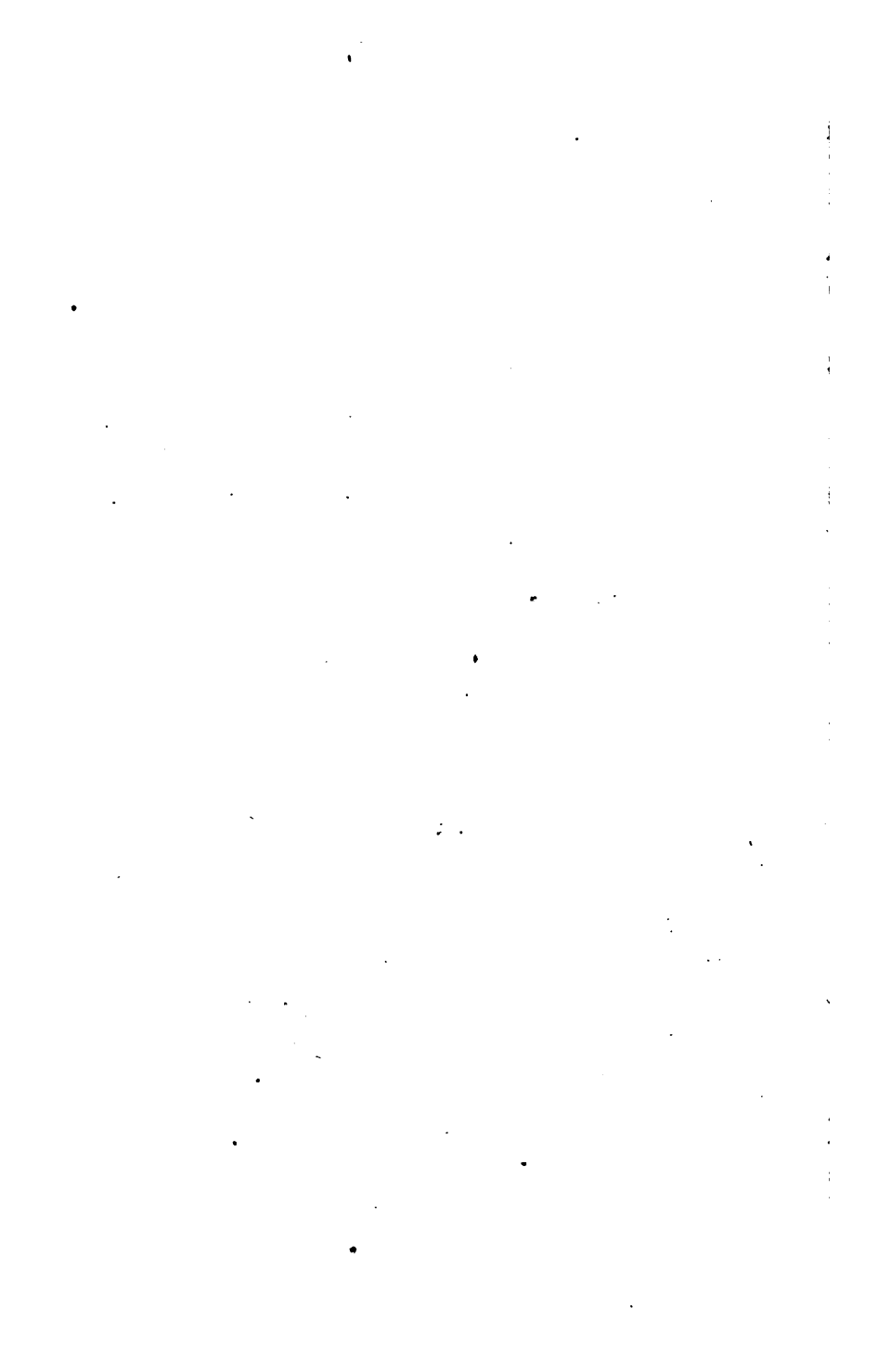
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1817



ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS





THE
PRINCESS;
OR
THE BEGUINE.

BY LADY MORGAN,
AUTHOR OF "O'DONNEL," &c.

"She was one of those kind of nuns, an' please your honour, of which your honour knows there are a good many in Flanders, which they let go loose."—"By thy description, Trim," said my Uncle Toby, "I dare say she was a young Beguine."

TRISTRAM SHANDY.

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THE PRINCESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE OPERA.

Croiriez-vous que je reviens de l'opéra ! La fête se faisoit pour l'Abbé Arnauld, qui n'en a pas vu, depuis Urbain VIII., qu'il étoit à Rome. Il en a été fort content ; je suis chargé des complimens de toute sa loge.

Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, vol. iii. p. 10.

A PARTY at the opera arranged for the special entertainment of the bishop of Angers, one of the most pious prelates of the Gallican church, and in the reign, too, of one of the most pious of the French kings ! A strange trait of manners this, and yet one only in a myriad, proving that hostility to theatrical exhibitions formed no principle of the church's original system.

By the introduction of 'mysteries,' the clergy

laid the foundation for the revival of the drama — fallen into oblivion, with the other arts of civilization, on the destruction of the Roman empire. Dramatic entertainments also were long the favourite festivities in the palaces of Roman cardinals; and even popes did not disdain to patronise the stage; while the episcopal church of England, long after the restoration of the Stuarts, showed its abhorrence of puritanical republicanism by its indulgence to the drama, to which some of its members directly contributed.

The private theatricals of Whitehall are on pleasant record. The duke's daughters, the ladies Mary and Anne (the future most orthodox queens of England), played in the same pieces with Mesdames Knight, Davis, and Butler, and "the cattel of that sort," as Evelyn phrases it; and the king's chaplains and the church's prelates assisted with as little reserve as the French bishop of Angers showed in visiting Madame de Sévigné's box at the grand opera.

Down to the middle of the long reign of George the Third, the stage was considered as

a subsidiary school for morals, and the opera as a royal academy of arts. Both escaped alike the reprobation and the interference of spiritual legislation; and it was not until the downfall of the French church, in the summit of its power, wealth, and abuses, had given the alarm to all other churches, that an ultra-rigorous observance of ceremonious forms, savouring more of Calvin than of Luther, decreed that, at the King's Theatre of London, the curtain should drop on Saturday nights precisely as the clock struck twelve. It mattered not what interests might be broken, what unities violated, what *entrechats* might be left uncut, what *pirouettes* suspended: the curfew-bell of the olden times tolled not with more effect than the prompter's bell knelled the parting Saturday night, and ushered in the dawn of the coming Sabbath.

Sin and sanctity thus brought into juxtaposition even to an instant of time, the interdiction seems to have operated as an excitement; and Saturday night became a vogue, from the very anathema which sought to place it under the ban of public opinion. For nearly the quarter of a century afterwards, a box upon that night

doubled its value : and the lessees found an indemnity in this harvest for the losses incurred by those less productive representations which the church's censure had not rendered fashionable.

In the summer of 1833, there were added to the charm of fashion the more intrinsic attractions of a rare combination of professional excellence. Genius of the highest order—Rossini, Mozart, and Bellini,—talents of the very first calibre—Pasta, Malibran, Rubini, Tamburini, and Taglioni—ruled, each at the head of their several departments, over the passions and tastes of society.

Illustrators of arts which none can profess but the highly-organized (the “ exclusives” of nature's own selection), they would have received from poetical antiquity the highest honours : for what did antiquity possess—what have its sciences or its arts left, in poetry or marble, superior to the dramatic pathos of the ‘ Medea,’ or the enchanting graces of the ‘ Sylphide’ !

It happened that the hottest Saturday night of the hot month of June, in the season alluded to, witnessed the closest-packed audience at

the King's Theatre, that any King's Theatre at any season ever exhibited. Not a stall was vacant, not a seat in the pit was unoccupied ; while the boxes, teeming with beauty and resplendent with dress, rendered the spectacle *avant la scène* as attractive as that upon it. Neither the sombre magnificence of the Scala, nor the fairy glories of San Carlos, are comparable, for general effect, to the spectacle presented on such a night in the Opera-house of London. The theatres of Italy are antique temples ; the theatres of Germany are dark dens ; but the London Opera-house, *malgré* its calico draperies and paltry decorations, is a colosseum of living beauty and brilliancy unmatched in Europe.

The cause of the unusual concourse, on this particular night, was the concentration of all the talents which had each separately filled the house on former representations—the brightest inspirations of Rossini and Bellini—the union of the high classical *seria* of Pasta, with the brilliant and pure *buffa* of Malibran, and the poetry of Taglioni's epic dance !

Every corner therefore was crowded, save

only that one box which, as in a microcosm, is wont to contain the very quintessentiality of the fashion and ton of London. This box, destined to be known to posterity by the style and title of "the Omnibus," lies in the pit tier, on the left or king's side of the house, and so close to the stage, that the Marquis of Montessor, its *doyen* and founder, numbered from it, for a wager, every spangle on the glittering slipper of Fanny Elsler, as she paused from her tiptoe *pose*, to curtesy her gratitude for applause to the house in general, and to his lordship in particular.

In the seventeenth century, the *bel air* of Paris took their station on the stage, within view of the audience, some in ball-dresses, some "*en bandit*," while those of the same class and rank, who happened to have been discovered in forgeries, or other frauds, then in vogue at the court, took refuge among the footmen. In the nineteenth century, the *bel air* of London resorted to the Omnibus—a joint-stock company assemblage of supreme ton and hypercriticism.

The origin of this incorporation probably lay in a desire to judge of the points and steps of the

priestesses of Terpsichore with the naked eye ; but, like many other foundations, it soon derogated from its primeval character, and became the vogue, without reference to any particular object. It was the fashion to be a member of the Omnibus, because the numbers were limited—because it enabled a man to cut his mother's family box, to get rid of his wife's set, or to have a house of refuge against the necessity of occupying his own high-paid place in the box of some autocratess of fashion, to which it is a distinction to subscribe and a bore to be confined.

The subscription-list of the Omnibus was always complete in its numbers, vacancies being promptly filled, and transferable tickets, though not strictly forbidden, difficult to be had. Usually, however, it remained empty till the close of the opera ; but it was *de rigueur* that it should have its complement of connoisseurship by the first act of the ballet.

The 'Cenerentola' and the 'Anna Bolena' had exhausted the extremes of sensation, leaving no cool suspense between all that is exquisite in pleasure and in pain ; and the Sylphide had already winged her airy flight up the chimney,

but the Omnibus was still unoccupied, except by the eternal Marquis Montessor, who, true to the first bar of the overture of the ballet, sat with his elbows resting on the front of the box, his chin upon his hands, his soul (*tale quale*) in his eyes, and his eyes on the "many-twinkling feet" of some favourite odalisque of the evening. Uttering his *bravas*, "deep but not loud," he remained so absorbed, that even the opening of the box-door, its being shut with a violence that called forth the disapprobation of the pit, and the pouncing of a new-comer on the seat beside him, failed to withdraw his attention from a performance which he was seeing for the twenty-second time.

Nothing in nature or in art could be more opposite than the members of this *tête-à-tête*. Lord Montessor was formed in the prodigality of nature as to the *matériel*. His corpulency resisted every restraint of art (and none was spared) to shape it into symmetry. His countenance resisted every attempt to mould it to any expression more decided than the languishing simper of a *ci-devant jeune homme*, or the sneer of aristocratic morgue. High and hard

living had alone left its trace and tint on a face which afforded a broad field for the display of both; and "bewigged," though not "rouged," at forty-six, his lordship exhibited one of the last remaining impersonations of the profligacy and ton which the then nearly-extinct court of Carlton-house had left behind it.

The new-arrival, on the contrary, was a prime-of-life man, and of a totally different appearance. His tall, slight, undulating figure still retained an air of youthful elasticity; but high temples, and a brow indented with the impressions of thought, denoted a longer acquaintance with the realities of life. Clusters of light chestnut curls were thrown off the forehead almost to the back of a finely-formed head. A complexion pale to sickliness, fine but deep-set eyes, a restless and unquiet glance, a brow in perpetual movement, and an expression of *mal-aise*, clouding—almost distorting—a very intellectual countenance,—assigned Sir Frederick Mottram (in a moral sense at least) to the "uneasy classes" of society.

He was altogether a fine specimen of the Saxon race, of which a few only, in right of their

wealth, sometimes find their way among the Norman gentry of the land. Though well dressed, he still wanted something of the air of fashion which was spread over the naturally vulgar form of the highly-descended Marquis,—something of that conventional mystery, so difficult to define, and so unworthy of the effort to analyse it: but he supplied the deficiency by a characteristic *nonchalance*, the result, perhaps, of apathy, or of ill health. He was near-sighted also, and looked as if he only saw the world through the medium of a clearing-glass.

On entering the Omnibus, he flung himself on a seat, with his back against the partition of the neighbouring box, and turned from the audience; but his eyes were not directed to the stage—they were closed against its brilliancy. After a few minutes, however, he took up an opera-glass, reconnoitred the house, and throwing up “a look malign askance” at the opposite tier, he again suddenly withdrew his eyes, opened the *libretto* of the “Norma,” and commenced reading that ode to the living Norma, whose poetry is so far beyond the usual strain of such compositions.

It was not till Lord Montessor (whose brother, Lord John, was the husband of Sir Frederick Mottram's only sister) had braved off his "Cynthia of the minute," and thrown himself back in his chair to repose his hands and eyes during the performance of the *figurantes*, that he perceived the presence of the new spectator. The discovery gave to his vacant face a slight expression of astonishment.

"Hollo! Mottram," he said, "you here! *cosa rara!* To think of you being anywhere but at St. Stephen's! Have you got a subscription, or did my brother John leave you his ticket? Poor fellow! I know it is in the market." (Lord John had recently *levanted* to Paris.)

His lordship's question was negatived in a tone expressive of as much disgust and contempt as a monosyllable could convey.

"You very rarely honour the opera with your presence now," continued Lord Montessor, yawning.

"Very," was the sulky reply.

"Do you really never go to your own box, —that is, to Lady Frances's?"

"Never."

"You, too, who are such a *fanatico* for music!"

"That perhaps is the reason."

"Why, they *do* keep up an infernal noise there. Since they have thrown Lady Frances's and the Princess of Schaffenhansen's boxes into one, they have always a set of noisy boys about them—sucking senators, dandy guardsmen, and pert *attachés*. Devilish bad taste that—it would have sunk a woman in the good old times of the Regency! No man was qualified for service then under forty—just as in the French Chambers."

Lord Montressor raised his glass, and fixing it at Lady Frances's box, he asked, "Who is that *beau blondin* peeping over your wife's shoulder?"

"Don't know in the least."

"Why, how the devil should you, with your back turned, and your eyes shut! Oh, I see; it is Cousin Claude Campbell—*le petit page d'amour*, as the Princess calls him. Lady Frances has more of his services than their Royal Highnesses—I suppose she gives him more sugar-plums! Look at the little villain, nestling

between Lady Frances and the Princess! He is in waiting, too, this week: but the Duke, perhaps, is in the House.—I say, Mottram, will you dine with me on the twentieth? I must have him—I mean the Duke: shall I send your name in the list?”

“No.”

“What, not meet the Duke! *Par exemple!* You are not going to take office under the Whigs, are you?”

“No!”

“Why won’t you meet his Royal Highness, then?”

“Because I am engaged.”

“Engaged! Nonsense—that goes for nothing when one is invited to meet the royalties—Brava, brava, bravissima!”

The return of the dancing deity, at whose shrine Lord Montessor worshipped, cut short his comment on the etiquette of royal invitations; for she was cutting a pirouette immediately under his eye. He saw he was *danced at*; and his idle garrulity gave place to the gratification of a vanity which was never idle. He nodded his consciousness of her implied homage

to his judgment, and gave free scope to his rapturous connoisseurship.

“ *Brava, brava, la petite Mimmie ! pas mal, la belle enfant !* That girl improves rapidly ; she wants only muscle—nothing but that. It may easily be acquired. Do you know, you may train a figure to anything ?—may indeed—quite a science. I’ll tell you how I manage with Mimmie : I tie up her ankles in bootikins like a race-horse, make her steep her feet in arrow-root when she comes off the stage, and never allow her to sup on anything heavier than the wing of a gelinotte, which I import for her from Brussels. — Apropos to gelinottes and to Brussels—we had the Belgian business on in our House last night, so I bolted early. I have had enough of “the happy effects” of the protocol system ; they are abundantly exemplified in national bankruptcy and a standing army — don’t you think so ? ”

“ No.”

“ Why, you spoke the other night as if you did : you ridiculed Palmerston’s ‘ early settlement of the Belgico-Dutch question.’ ”

Sir Frederick either did not, or would not hear this remark.

"By the bye," continued Lord Montessor, "what have you been doing in your House to-night ; for it seems you sat this evening *par extraordinaire*. Aubrey told me you got a mauling from one of the Irish *Mimbers*, one of your 'honourable friends in the dirty shirt.' Ha! ha! ha! You took nothing from the Paddies, you see, by your Relief vote! We told you half-and-half men that long ago, but you would not believe us.—Brava, dirty Sal! How she flounders and flounces about, poor fat thing!

"Do you know why she is called dirty Sal? for, *par parenthèse*, she's as fresh as a rose. It's because she's put off with all the cast dresses of the wardrobe—*C'est une si bonne pâte!* I remember her quite beautiful. She was a mere child in D'Egville's time, and *fit fortune* in '*La Belle Laitière*.' She was then very near making head against Parisot—she was indeed! but she fell early into fat. It was your wife, above all persons in the world, told me she was called dirty Sal. Claude Campbell told her. You know, I suppose,

that he is a little *prince de coulisse* ? I never miss him at a *répétition* of a new ballet. A promising boy—that—nothing like a year's diplomacy at Vienna, to finish a Westminster boy. They say it was you got him made an *attaché*, and sent him away to get rid of him, because he was such a nuisance ! Always stumbling over him, like a French poodle or a footstool."

"Then they say a confounded lie !" burst forth Sir Frederick Mottram vehemently, and throwing down the *libretto*. "I have no interest with the ministry ; and if I had, I should not exert it for such a whelp as that."

"Yes,—he's just that—spoiled by the women. I hear he was recalled for riding at the public races in a tri-coloured jacket, while the Excellency, his *chef*, actually rode his own famous *Principessa* in orange silk—no joke that. But you're not going, are you, before Taglioni has danced her *pas seul* ?"

Sir Frederick had risen unconsciously ; every muscle was in movement, his whole frame tremulous with irascibility.

"Oh ! so, if you are going to your wife's box, I'll go with you. I want to make my ex-

cuses to the Princess for not supping with her to-night ;” and he added significantly, “ *Je donne à souper*, myself. There is such a rage for suppers on Saturday nights after the opera ! I wonder Sir Andrew does not attack it. Shall we go ?”

Sir Frederick resumed his seat, and throwing his arm on the box, and directing his attention to the divine dancing of Taglioni, replied, “ I am not going to my wife’s box ; but pray don’t let me interfere with you.”

“ I see you are out of sorts to-night, Mottram—all ajar. Aubrey told me that they had badgered you in the House into one of your fits of humour. You broke loose, he said, in a fine style—quite Demosthenic—and were left on your legs in your second hour, when he came away.”

“ Which makes silence and a seat a great luxury,” said Sir Frederick languidly, and resuming his old position.”

“ Yes, you *have* the air of being devilishly bored, just now.”

“ *Just now*, I am,” was the sharp reply.

“ A pleasant bear-garden your House of Com-

mons,—the ‘Reformed Deformed,’ as Lord Allington calls them ! and, what’s worse, such a set of vulgarians, whose acquaintance you are obliged to admit *out*, as well as *in* the House ! You must be continually exposed to coming in contact with some talking blockhead.”

“ I am,” said Sir Frederick, “ very much exposed.”

“ Were I you,” said Lord Montessor, pointing his glass at the opposite side, “ I would cut dead—”

“ I should like it much,” said Sir Frederick, with irrepressible petulance.

“ Well, I must go to the Belgian Princess, and make my excuse. Her German etiquette is so susceptible, you have no idea.”

Lord Montessor then rose, hurried on his fool’s cap without its bells, and left the box as the curtain dropt on the first act of the ballet.

Sir Frederick settled himself into a corner, in the full luxury of that solitude which it is possible to enjoy even in an opera box. Bringing his glass to the proper focus and to a permanent position, he rivetted his entire attention on the interior of his wife’s box ; for he had come to

the opera that night from the House of Commons, for the purpose of watching the movements of some of its occupants.

Lady Frances Mottram, an epitome of English female fashion, resembled in her look and air the beauties of the Whitehall galaxy of Charles the Second's court. Fair, *fade*, and languishing, her dress, and full blonde tresses *frisées au naturel*, gave her the character of one of Sir Peter Lely's portraits, "stepped from out its"—frame. Her type was *La belle Jennings*; and as far as depended upon her historical costume, her success was perfect. Still extremely handsome, if she had ceased to be extremely young, she wore the appearance of one in perpetual ambuscade, *pour surprendre les cœurs*, with all that coquetry which, on the verge of middle life, seeks to catch the lingering charm of youth, and to fix by art the influence which nature once commanded without an effort.

In a dress which, in less fantastic times, would have rendered her the object of the night,—and which, even in the actual era of pictorial effect, infringed on the licence of fashion beyond

all example, save that of her eccentric foreign friend and inseparable companion, the Princess of Schaffenhhausen—Lady Frances Mottram sat in evidence before two thousand spectators with the same ease and indifference as she would have done in her own drawing-room ; her head thrown back, her fine arm stretched to its utmost length in the front of the box, and her full sleeve of white brocade falling over it with an effect which tempted an Irish artist,* on the opposite side of the house, to sketch her for a figure in his admirable collection of antique costumes. She was listening with downcast eyes to some observation of the Princess of Schaffenhhausen, who stood in profile to the audience, as if in the act of departure, and, as it seemed to the intense gaze of Sir Frederick, of dictation.

The appearance of the Princess was, indeed, that of one to whom the consciousness of some special supremacy gave a right to dictate. Her figure was erect, her outline severe, her hand raised, and her forefinger pointed, as if in warning or reproof. She was dressed in a costume of other times, and of a country and society more remote than that adopted by Lady Frances.

* Probably Mr. Franklin.

The widow of a Belgian Prince, of a Count of the Empire and a *Grand d'Espagne*, she had assumed the singular habiliments in which a former Princess of Schaffenhhausen (*camerara mayor* to the Queen of Philip the Fifth) was painted by Velasquez, in a picture still extant in her collection abroad, and of which a copy, by the Princess's own pencil, ornamented her house in London.

The dress was black, rich in its texture, and voluminous in its folds; but it fitted closely to the long waist and well-defined bust, which was covered by the *sabingas* (a chemise of old point lace), gathered round the throat. From her girdle, which was composed of gems and medals, hung a *cordón* of some ecclesiastical order, terminated by a cross of rubies. From a knot of brilliants, at the head of her stomacher, fell several chains of pearls, each holding an *Agnus Dei*. Her hair, of a dark gold colour (whether false or her own), was parted above her dark brows, and fell on either side in wavy tresses. Her forehead was bound by a small black band; and the whole most singular figure was set off, rather than concealed, by the Spanish mantilla of rich black lace which dropped round

her, from the top of her fine-formed head, to the extreme edge of her long and flowing drapery. As she thus stood erect and commanding, contrasted with the recumbent figure and fair face of her English friend, and in the strong relief of the crimson drapery of the back-ground, the picture was perfect. It was a Leonardo da Vinci, and recalled that most beautiful of painted allegories, (the treasure of the palace Sciara,) "Modesty rebuking Vanity;" it was Reason dictating to Folly.

Sir Frederick Mottram breathed thick and short as he gazed. He then lowered his glass, as if to relieve his strained eyes, and then again he resumed it, till the combination which had attracted him was dissolved. The Belgian Princess had departed; and in her place, *vis-à-vis* to his wife, and playing with her large fan, appeared a creature as fair and as frivolous as herself. It was the young *ex-attaché* of the British embassy at Vienna — the gentleman of the bedchamber of a Royal Duke — the *petit page d'amour* of the Princess of Schaffenhansen, and the handsome little cousin and godson of Lady Frances, — Claude Campbell.

Sir Frederick laid aside his glass, resumed his

seat with his back to the audience, folded his arms, closed his eyes, and waited for the conclusion of the ballet, with the strange intention of joining his wife in the Round-room, and, for the first time for many years, of accompanying her home.

He had scarcely taken up his position, when a flush of young men (the regular occupants of the Omnibus), who had returned from a white-bait dinner at Greenwich, burst in. Sir Frederick immediately burst out, and entered the first box which lay open and empty. It still breathed of the ether which its *blazée* and hysterical mistress, the Duchess of——, always left behind her. Originally part of a double box, it had, on some sudden dissolution of a capricious partnership, been separated by a thin, ill-constructed partition, hastily thrown up; and its counterpart was then occupied (to judge by the variety of jargons spoken among its inmates,) by a foreign congress. The company were, in fact, the representatives of the *haut ton* of the season, foreign and domestic.

Of its fluctuating society there remained, at the moment when Sir Frederick came into such close contiguity, but few. Of these Lord Al-

lington (the wit *titré* of the day) was the most distinguished.

Lord Allington, who, like his great prototype, "never said a foolish thing, nor ever did a wise one," was one of those who bring talent into disrepute by indiscretions which, in the dull, pass unnoticed. His fashion, however, had survived his dilapidated fortunes; and he said so many pleasant things on his own ruin, that it seemed as if he had sacrificed his wealth to his wit. His epigrams still passed current, when his notes did not; and he got credit for his bon-mots, though he had lost it at his tailor's. He had borrowed the box for the evening from an old amateur Duke, who, having become deaf, now went only to the German opera; and he had devoted it to the especial service of the Honourable Mr. and Mrs. St. Leger, recent arrivals from the Continent: with the latter he was *aux petits soins*—and with the former, a subject of that timid aversion which "dulness ever bears to wit," upon instinct.

Mr. and Mrs. St. Leger were a rather popular couple; for she was a flirt, and he was a fool. Each therefore, by representing a very

large class in the world of fashion, obtained a considerable portion of its suffrages. Mr. St. Leger had ruined his own private affairs in the outset of life; and for that reason, probably, (no other being ostensible,) he had been selected to manage those of the nation.

Among other diplomatic offices, he had recently enjoyed the honour of representing the majesty of England in a German court of the third or fourth class; where, as envoy extraordinary, he had been sent by the then ministry, to dance the *Polonaise* with dowager Margravines, play *écarté*, and truckle to legitimacy. For these services, he had enjoyed an income which exceeded that of the American president, and might have salaried the whole frugal cabinet of Belgium.

Bentham would have said, that Mr. St. Leger had maximized his wages, and minimized his services; but how could the grandson of two dukes represent without an adequate income? and in a German court, where qualities are estimated by quarterings, high birth was indispensable. It was all, therefore, *selon les règles* of legitimate diplomacy.

Reform, however, came; and, regardless of vested rights, had, among other things, recently reformed this "*petit bout de ministre*:" and the Honourable Mr. St. Leger, being no longer permitted to hang on the public purse, had returned with his wife to England, to hang on their own noble relations; to get a seat in the House *if* they could,—a seat at a dinner-table *where* they could,—a box at the opera *when* they could,—and to join in the full cry of conservatism against a system which, whatever it may prove to the nation, was to them ruin in its fullest development.

Mrs. Montague St. Leger had rubbed against foreign courts and foreign notabilities till she had acquired a sort of European *lingua Franca*, which was a source of endless amusement to Lord Allington; and her pretty little *chiffonné* face and figure, her French toilet, Italian gestures, and German forms, had actually awakened him to a sort of fancy, which he mistook for a sentiment.

To one so satiated as Lord Allington, an emotion was a benefaction; and he exerted his gratitude in favour of his benefactress by foraging for

opera-boxes on Saturday nights, and for tickets for the Zoological Gardens on Sunday mornings; advantages which neither the Duchess her grandmother, nor the Marquis her uncle, could obtain her. For fashion, like the Romish church, is an open republic; and the spirit of the one, as of the other, passes all understanding and defies all definition.

Lord Alfred Montessor, who had taken the place of an Italian Count, (vacated on the Italian preference always given to the newest arrival,) had come to announce the intention of the Princess of Schaffenhauseu to look in on Mrs. St. Leger before she went home; and he seemed to consider himself distinguished by the commission. Lord Alfred was the third brother of the Marquis of Montessor; and his second brother having married a *roturière* for her wealth, he was ready to follow the example, and to marry the Princess of Schaffenhauseu for her Rhenish vineyards and Belgian forests. The position of the two brothers had alike tempted them to dependance, as the preferable alternative to beggary. The plebeian birth of Miss Mottram had not stood in the way of Lord John; and a

reputation of no equivocal character was not an impediment to the speculations of Lord Alfred. In both instances, institutions were, perhaps, more in fault than they.

There was also present in the box, Colonel Winterbottam, the model of all fashionable gossips, past, present, and to come;—a gentle and genteel representative of the led captains of less civilized times, and the devoted *creato* of Lord Aubrey, (a top-sawyer of fashion, whose dulness he amused and whose corks he drew.) For the rest, Colonel Winterbottam was one whom everybody knew and nobody cared for; and he conscientiously paid back society in the coin he received from it; for he knew everybody and cared for—nobody.

Next to the Colonel sat Captain Levison, a light-hearted, light-headed, handsome young guardsman, who got rid of his burthensome vitality and unproductive activity as he best could; and who now only dropped in to the opera from a breakfast at Norwood, in the hopes of an invitation to a supper at the Princess of Schaffenhhausen's.

The descent of Lord Alfred from Lady Fran-

ces's box was the topic of discourse, as the eyes of the party were turned up to observe the transit of the Princess herself.

"There is my brother Montessor," said Lord Alfred, offering his arm to the *Durchlauchtigste*. "It is a great honour, I can tell you, her coming to see *you*, Mrs. St. Leger. She says you were civil to her at Frankfort, somewhere."

"Oh, yes!" said Mrs. St. Leger, in an affected foreign accent; "so I was. *La Diète!* there is nothing so *collet monté* as the Diet at Frankfort; and when the Princess of Schaffenhhausen pounced upon it, (nobody knew whence, *car elle tomba des cieux*,) there was a doubt which of the princesses it was; for the Schaffenhhausens are like the Gallitzins, '*comme s'il en pleuvait*.' So there was a question how she should be received in the society of *la Diète*; and the Austrian ambassador, as president, wrote home for instruction, before he would let her into the Palais Taxis, or give her the honours of *L'Altesse*."

"Well, you know how slow the poor dear Aulic council moves! and, before their answer came,

the Princess was off for England, and so was I. But I took such an *engouement* for her! She lent me one of her nice carriages all the time she stayed, and was so good-natured! in fact, I know her to be a *grande et puissante dame*. The Prince, her late husband, was one of those rich Belgic, German, Spanish princes, you know, like the De Lignes and the D'Arembourgs; and the *on dit* goes that he left her all his wealth not entailed:—his vineyards touch dear Metternich's."

"By Jove!" said Lord Alfred, rubbing his hands, "that makes one's mouth water. How I should like to drink her health in her own Johannisberg, in her castle on the Rhine. Besides, she really is quite charming."

"Yes," lisped Mrs. St. Leger, "I knew she would *far furore* in London—she is so rich, and so odd, and dresses beyond everything; and then so *very* clever,—she speaks five languages, and paints like a professional artist."

"Still there is something *louche* about her," said Mr. St. Leger. "She made a great sensation at Frankfort, visited all the hospitals, left

money for the *Hospice des Aliénés*, and for la *Maison des Orphelines*; and potted about the town with a *Béguine*, a sort of sister of charity; *se fourrant partout*, as the bourgemestre said—for she not only visited the prisons, but the prisoners of state who had got up the *révolution manquée* of last year, *la canaille!* People thought that odd.”

“ ‘Charity covereth a multitude of sins,’ ” said Colonel Winterbottam; “and the Princess has a tolerable list to clothe, if report here speaks truth.”

“What sins? venial or venal?” asked Lord Alfred.

“German morals are not strait-laced,” replied the Colonel.

“As ours are,” added Lord Allington, drily.

“Oh! for facility of divorce and left-hand marriages—*passe*. But when it comes to a trifle of murder,—” continued Colonel Winterbottam, shaking his head and looking through his glass.

“You don’t mean that?” said Lord Alfred, anxiously.

"St. Leger might tell you, if he pleased," said the Colonel.

St. Leger placed his finger on his lips with a mysterious air.

"So, you are too diplomatic?—Well, then, the story goes, that she contrived to get rid of her first husband in order to marry the second."

"*Bagatella!*" exclaimed Lord Allington.

"Poignard, or prussic acid?" asked Captain Levison, drawing up his cravat.

"She stopped his mouth with a handkerchief, after a smoking-bout," said the Colonel.

"She had better have stopped it with damages, as we do in moral England," said Lord Allington.

"But, after all," added Captain Levison, "there may not be a word of truth in the story, which may be all got up by radical papers and whig journals. Her suppers are so very good!"

"And if there were truth in it," said Lord Alfred, "these things depend so much upon circumstance!—A fine woman energized by

passion !—jealousy, for instance—Eh ! Allington ? your duchess at Rome and her courier, to wit !”

“ Yes, hers was meridian blood : but a cold phlegmatic German ! a *vrouw* killing her overfed *graf*, and with a halter for a stiletto — Pah ! there’s no poetry in that.”

“ It was not a halter,” said the Colonel ; “ it was a *fichu brodé*, which led to the discovery.”

“ *Un assassinat à la petite maîtresse*,” said Mrs. St. Leger, tittering : “ but, somehow, I don’t think those things are so very much minded abroad.”

“ No matter,” said Lord Alfred. “ She is a personage—an aristocrat, and will therefore be exposed to all sorts of calumnies here ; but she has had the most rapid and complete success of any foreigner since the beautiful Gallitzin, who turned our fathers’ heads some thirty years ago.”

“ *Succès de vogue*,” said Lord Allington, with whom it was notorious the Princess was no favourite. “ I have seen so many of those

'complete successes' die out before the season was over!"

"You will find the Princess of Schaffenhauseu won't wait for that," said Mr. St. Leger. "Before you can telegraph her arrival in one place, she is off to another; which makes it doubted by some whether she is the Princess—I mean, her Highness of"

At that moment the Princess entered the box with the Marquis Montessor. She saluted on both her creamy cheeks the little *chiffon* of diplomacy, gave the ex-minister her hand to kiss, took her seat in the front, but with her back to the scene, and placed her elbow nearly in contact with the arm of her neighbour in the adjoining box, Sir Frederick Mottram. All present were known to her, or desirous of being so; and she received their recognitions and presentations rather with German formality than foreign courtesy; but, after the first introduction, she fell into that ease and decision of manner which characterize women of the world all over the world. Her accent, when she spoke English, was foreign; her voice, clear as the tinkling of

a silver bell; and her quick, restless eye, unassisted by a glass, reconnoitred with rapidity the whole side of the house which she had left.

“What a good box you have got, Madame St. Leger! I like to see you ex-excellences so well provided for.”

“We happen not to be provided for at all, thanks to our reforming ministry,” said Mr. St. Leger.

“*Mauvaise politique!*” said the Princess. “You English fight and pay better than any nation in the world; but when you come to diplomatize, you are, *ma foi! des franchises ganaches!* In your England, you spend all in what you call secret service; but an opera-box is worth all the police *espionage* in the world.”

“Explain us that, *belle Princesse*,” said Lord Allington, sneeringly.

“Ah, *mon Dieu!* I explain nothing, I understand nothing; but *mon esprit observateur* has long discovered that there is

‘Quelques rapports secrets
Entre le corps diplomatique
Et celui des ballets.’

N'est-ce pas, Milord Montressor?”

Every one laughed at the reference: Lord Montessor looked pleased at the allusion.

“The Princess is quite right,” he said. “An ambassador may do more business in his opera-box than in his cabinet. A conversation symphonized by the notes of Meyerbeer is worth all the official notes in the world.”

“It was found so at Milan, in 1820,” observed the Princess, “where words dropped in a box at the Scala led to the dungeons of Spielsberg. Only make people talk, no matter about what, the dominant idea will come out. The old *finoteries du Conclave*,—the *language being given to conceal thought*—the *volto sciolto, pensieri stretti*, and other old political axioms, are worth nothing now. *Une causerie de sofa vaut bien la question ordinaire et extraordinaire*; and an opera-box is the best of all secular confessionals—for those who know how to use it.”

“The true secret tribunal!—eh, Princess?” said the Ex-envoy.—“Have many of the foreign ministers boxes this season, Colonel?”

"All, I believe, except perhaps him of Belgium."

"And why 'perhaps'?"

"Because I suspect the whole salary allowed him by the revolutionary government of *les braves Belges* would scarce pay for a box on the third tier."

The Princess shrugged her shoulders, and observed, "But what would you have of a *gouvernement de circonstance*?"

"Or rather *d'occasion*," said Lord Allington: "for the four days at Brussels were but the three days of Paris at second-hand."

"Yes, the brand came lighted from France," said Lord Alfred.

"But the train was well laid to receive it in Belgium," said the Princess. "Ah! those hard-headed Flemings! You don't know them."

"No matter," said Mr. St. Leger, "the thing won't work—can't go on at all."

"The miracle is that it has gone on so long," said the Princess: "three years *bien sonnés*! *je n'en reviens pas*."

"Nor I," said Mr. St. Leger. "Do you

know anything of the new people, Princess?"

"Do you?" asked the Princess, significantly.

"How should I!" he replied, contemptuously.

"*Eh, comment,*" said the Princess, with a supercilious curl upon her lip — "*comment voulez-vous que je les connaisse?* A government of lawyers, professors, doctors of law, and, for aught I know, of medicine—*au moins, des Docteurs.*"

There was a general smile at the warmth of this explosion.

"And yet, Princess," said Lord Allington, "these lawyers, professors, and doctors have made head against the most consummate statesmen in Europe. They have taken their stand with the Talleyrands, the Metternichs, the Falcks, the Palmerstons, and the Bulows."

"*Incroyable!*" said the Princess; "these creatures of yesterday, just dug up, with all the fresh clay about them, to compete with such men was out of all ordinary calculation."

"I remember," said Mr. St. Leger, "when I

was in the Foreign Office in 1830, the Protocol No. 1. was despatched to the first provisional government, by Cartwright and Bresson. We thought the whole farce would have been over before our *chargés* could arrive at Brussels, or that the *roturier* cabinet would have taken an age to learn the rudiments of their art. Not at all. In the *rapport* which came back immediately, it was said that ‘*La réponse ne se fit pas attendre ;*’ and Tielmans met our men with an *aplomb* that was inconceivable.”

“What is the secret, Princess,” said Lord Allington, “that men so new should have proved themselves so equal to cabinets so old?”

“Because they *are* new,” said the Princess with a smile difficult to interpret.

“The thing won’t hold another year,” said Mr. St. Leger, dogmatically.

“It ought not to hold,” said the Princess ; “for, by its new code, no woman can reign.”

“That is nothing to the purpose,” said Lord Allington ; “women always reign—by influence, if not by right. Every cabinet in Europe,” he added, fixing his eyes on the Princess till

she lowered hers beneath his glance, "has an *ambassadrice de poche*, though some are not so openly avowed as others."

"Women are good missionaries," said the Princess, "and worthy to preach *la religion des rois*."

"They are the best of adventurers, because the boldest," said Lord Allington, pointedly; "and they always succeed in—"

.... "blinding *le trop clair-voyant*," interrupted the Princess, carelessly.

"Not always," said Lord Allington.

"Who is the Belgian minister here?" asked Mrs. St. Leger.

"Don't know at all," said the little Ex-envoy.

"Haven't the least idea," said the hereditary legislator, Lord Montessor.

"A very able and *spirituel* person," said Lord Allington.

"Do you remember the Prince's *mot* last year, when a change was expected?" asked Colonel Winterbottam, eagerly.

"Let's have it," said the Guardsman. "He is such a famous old fellow!"

“ Why, some quidnunc at the Travellers’ asked him whether Monsieur Van B—— or Monsieur Van C—— were the person expected from Brussels. ‘ I hope it is Monsieur Van C——,’ he said, ‘ *car je ne le connais pas.*’ ”

“ *Impayable !* ” said the Princess. “ That prince was a great man for *his* day, but not for ours. *Ecoutez, messieurs !* you must not put new wine into old bottles.—But, Milord Montessor, whose is that great box you occupied to-night ? I should like to have it next season, if I should be here.”

“ Impossible, Princess ! It is reserved in perpetuity for the select—the *élite*.”

“ What do you call the *élite* ? ”

“ In the present instance, it means some certain men, of a certain party, patrons of the opera ; but, generally, the term is applicable to the exclusives of London society, the flower of the aristocracy, or privileged classes. For instance . . . ”

“ Privilege ! why, all who have money are privileged here, *n’est-ce pas ?* ”

“ It should seem so,” said Lord Allington,

in a low tone, not caught by the insolent foreigner.

"Is that Sare *Chose*—my friend Lady Frances's husband, of the privileged class? for I saw him in the box pointing his glass at us. I thought he had been *roturier*."

"And so he is," replied the Marquis, "if, by Sir *Chose*, you mean Sir Frederick Mottram; and, as such, he is not exactly entitled to a place in our Omnibus; but he is allied to two noble families by marriage."

"*Ah, c'est vrai!* he is brother-in-law to *ce pauvre* Lord John, who has *bolted*, what you call—like that *escroc* Pomenars, *qui ne voulait pas se laisser pendre*. He is a duke's brother, I think."

"He is mine," said Lord Montessor, coolly; while the *naïveté*, or the ignorance, of the Princess caused a general titter.

"Poor John," said Lord Alfred, "has been hardly used by the newspapers! That little adventure or misadventure of his at Newmarket is a thing of frequent occurrence in the sporting world,—of royal precedent, in fact—only he happens to have been a little pushed for payment, before he had time to look about him."

"Well," said the Princess, "he has both time and space now; for I see by the papers that he is at Brussels. That city is the *maison de refuge de vous autres Anglais*,—of the *élite—entendez-vous?*"

"Not now," said Mr. St. Leger. "No English of respectability will stay at Brussels till the House of Nassau return."

"And if that doesn't soon occur, the Belgian commerce will be ruined—there will at least be an end of Antwerp," said Lord Montessor.

"Your ministers do not seem to know their own mind," said the Princess: the truth, indeed, is, that, all things considered, Belgium has the best of the bargain in this delay. But Lord Palmerston should remember that, in the mean while, the poor English have nowhere to hide their head; and at the rate you are going on, *ma foi*, you will all want refuge somewhere, —at least you *élite*, who must soon work for your *pain quotidien*, *tout comme les autres*——"

"What can you do for your bread, Colonel?" said Mrs. St. Leger.

"My Lord Aubrey says I make punch excellently."

"And play it too," said Lord Allington, in an under tone.

"I shall set up a coffee-house," said Lord Montessor; "and I'll take you, Allington, for my waiter."

"Why not *maître du ballet, milord?*" said the Princess: "*on a toujours du goût pour son premier métier.*"

"I might do worse," replied the peer, conceitedly: "and so, Allington, you must be content to be my call-boy."

"Thank you," said Lord Allington, leaning his chin on his cane; "but I have taken my vocation already. I have a famous crossing in my eye; I won't tell where, though—some of you will take it else."

"From Crocky's to Jermyn-street?" asked the Guardsman eagerly.

"No, no," said the Princess; "you must not *escamoter* his gutter; there will always be dirty work enough for you all."

"What shall we make of — there?" said Mrs. St. Leger, pointing with her glass to an ex-official in the pit, who had been instrumental in getting her husband his appointment.

"A climbing-boy; and let his motto be 'High and dirty,'" said the Princess.

"Princess!" said Lord Allington, evidently displeased with the sarcastic foreigner, "I often wonder how it is, that, being as you are but two months in London, you know everything about every one."

"*Médiocre et rampant*," said the Princess, making at the same time a sign to Lady Frances, who was in close colloquy with her little cousin in the opposite box — "*Médiocre et rampant, et l'on arrive à tout*."

"You," said Lord Allington, pointedly, "are notoriously neither one nor the other."

"Well, then, I am rich and insolent," she added carelessly—" *Il y a tant de moyens pour parvenir*."

"There is something in that," said Lord Allington.

"Pray," said the Colonel, as he followed the direction of the Princess's eyes, "what does the great commoner think of that little cousin always fluttering about his wife?"

"*Ma foi*," said the Princess, "it is an affair of life and death. Miladi Frances must either

die of *ennui*, or dissipate it with *le petit page que voilà*."

"You may see him with her in the Park as regularly as her poodle," said Colonel Winterbottam.

"Yes, they always remind one of Rubens's great picture of Lady Arundel," said Lord Allington, "catalogued 'Lady, dwarf, and dog.'"

"*Que voulez-vous ? elle meurt d'ennui*," added the Princess, yawning. "It is a case of felony; her husband ought to be tried for his life. Ah ! you laugh, but a *mari grognard* is worse than a tertian ague."

"Worse indeed," said Lord Allington, "for it is a quotidian. Only think of uxoricide being brought home to the most moral man in England, and a coroner's inquest sitting on the beautiful body of Lady Frances Mottram, and bringing in a verdict of—'Died by the visitation of her husband's ill-humour.'"

"Well," said Colonel Winterbottam, "I though the great commoner too much occupied with the affairs of the nation, to find leisure for minding his own."

"A man has always time to *ennuyer* his wife," said the Princess.

“And a wife has not always the means of getting rid of a husband,” said Lord Allington — “at least, in *this* country.”

Every one remained silent, stunned by the hardihood of the remark. The Princess, however, did not acknowledge the epigram, and was occupied in attending to the ballet, and applauding Taglioni, with exclamations evidently of rapturous admiration.

“What studies,” she said, “for painting and poetry! Greek sculpture wanted these subjects of grace in movement.”

“Yes,” said Lord Allington, “movement, in all its power, is a modern discovery.”

“Not altogether,” said the Princess; “it is a modern discovery for the mass, but was always known to the few. When things come to be executed, ‘no secrecy comparable to celerity,’ says one of your few philosophical statesmen: the ‘celerity’ of Bacon, in the sixteenth century, was the movement of the nineteenth.”

“Talking of statesmen,” said Colonel Winterbottam, who always kept up a running fire of words upon system (the conversation Sharp of his own world of gossiping) — “Talking

of great statesmen, I do assure you there are very odd reports afloat about Mottram: some think all is not right in the upper story — Lord Aubrey says, that all half-and-half-men must be half mad !”

“ It appears that Aubrey keeps all his bright things for you,” said Lord Allington.

“ Be that as it may,” continued the Colonel, “ there are really all sorts of reports abroad. Some say, Mottram is going to join the Whigs — and his speech the other night looks like it ; others, that he is disgusted with all parties, and intends to retire from public life, and write the history of his own times ; — you know he has a taste for literature, and the arts, and all that kind of thing. But all agree that, in spite of his coal-mines and his steam-engines, he is cleared out. Some say, Mottram Hall must come to the hammer ; others, that the new house on Carlton-terrace is to be let for three years ; and that the family goes to the Continent, to join the forlorn-hope at Rome and Naples, and try to pull up.”

“ That comes of men frittering away their

fortunes," said Lord Allington, " in paying their tradesmen's bills."

At that moment there was heard a rustling in the adjoining box, and the door clapped with violence. The Princess now arose, and threw round a glance at the splendid circle. Beauty and brilliancy, sounds to intoxicate, and sights to dazzle, combined and concentrated all that nature and art, wealth and taste, can produce as the last result of refined civilization. The scene was the fairy forest of the 'Sylphide;' the moment, when the whole *corps de ballet*, the attendant nymphs, rush down the stage, in the flush of youth, grace, and movement, realizing so much poetry by means so mechanical.

What a scene of enchantment to the spectator! What an arena of labour, pain, privation, and effort to the actor! What an infinity of social evil, unseen, unthought of, forms the basis of the overgrown wealth necessary to purchase such a combination—a combination too, of which a few, even among the favoured children of chance and fortune, can really appreciate the unquestioned excellence. And is this all that money can bestow, or the magic of art pro-

duce for the gratification of sense ? Alas for humanity ! in all aspects little ; in none so little as in that of its pleasures !

While thoughts passed, or, from the expression of her countenance, might be supposed to pass, through the Princess's mind, a tiny repeater, set in her bracelet, struck twelve ; and the curtain fell, with the wings of the Sylphide. — Everybody started up.

“ Are you orthodox, you English ? ” she said, the expression of her face again changing to a look of sarcastic pleasantry, as she observed the audience thinning rapidly. “ But it seems your orthodoxy does not meddle with your suppers after the opera. Will you all therefore come to my *media-noche*, in St. James's Square ? ”

“ It would be heterodox indeed,” said Lord Alfred, “ to refuse that : one of the good results of shortening the opera on Saturdays, is the revival of suppers.”

Lord Allington now secured the arm of Mrs. St. Leger, who drew back to give precedence to the Princess. Madame Schaffenhauseu took that of Lord Montessor ; and flanked by Lord Alfred, and pioneered by Colonel Winterbot-

tam, they advanced through the dense and brilliant crowd to the Round-room. Captain Levison, who led the van, gave the order for the Princess's carriage by her high-sounding title, and fixed the attention of the multitude upon her distinguished person.

"The Princess of Schaffenhhausen's carriage!" roared out the attendant at the head of the stairs. There was a rush and a press.

"Is she a raal princess, Lady Dogherty?" asked a strange voice, proceeding from a strange group which followed close in the Princess's wake.

The question was overheard by Madame Schaffenhhausen. "*Dans ce mot-là je reconnais mon sang,*" she quoted laughingly, "for I have some drops of Irish blood in my veins!"

"Yes," said Lord Allington, "the siege of Limerick did the state of Austria some service; and Dick Talbot's reply to Louis XIV. might bear a pretty general application." *

* Louis XIV. observing the Duke of Tyrconnel to resemble himself, remarked conceitedly, "*Madame votre mère a été à notre cour, Monsieur le Duc?*" "Non, Sire," he replied; "*mais mon père y a été.*"

At that moment the Princess was fixed to the spot by the pressure of a foot treading on the end of her mantilla. She looked round with something more than curiosity. The sceptical inquirer as to the authenticity of her rank bowed low : he was to all appearance a distressed gentleman, or at least a gentleman in distress, to the uttermost infliction of heat, weariness, and a false position.

For the last ten minutes he had been dragged, pinched, nudged, and forced forward by two fair companions, in spite of a bulk of person ill suited to thread the mazes of the Round-room. Sometimes yielding, sometimes resisting the impetus of their movements, he vainly exclaimed, "Aisy now, Lady Dixon, dear ! the more haste the worse speed. Let go my arrum, Lady Dogherty, honey ! till I get at my hankercher ; musha ! but it's horrid hot ; I'm choking alive with the drowth."

The Lady Dixon thus apostrophised on his right, was long, lean, and loaded with the mourning drapery of widowhood. The Lady Dogherty thus solicited on his left, was stout, broad, and protuberant ; in dress, an illustra-

tion of Shakspeare's 'sun in flame-coloured taffeta'; and in undress, an outrage on the minor morals of the decent strait-laced toilet of the revived Gothic mode.

Her release of the Princess's mantilla was followed by an emphatic apology, which was listened to with an intensity of stare so protracted as to verge on the very confines of ill-breeding or ridicule; until the supercilious foreigner, hurried on by Colonel Winterbottam, relaxed her gaze, and left the eloquent apologist in the midst of her unfinished sentence.

"What originals!" said Lord Montessor, laughing.

"*Quelles horreurs!*" said Mrs. St. Leger.

"What very odd people come to the opera since the Reform Bill passed!" observed Lord Alfred.

"Very," said Colonel Winterbottam. "But that is a well-known Irish group from Brighton. The Princess's *friend* (for it must come to *that*) was called Lady Toe Dogherty, and gets on in society by treading upon people's feet, and by calling the next day to make her apologies, and to obtain perhaps a bowing acquaintance by the

same movement. Her intrigues to get to the Pavilion were very amusing."

"Winterbottam, you know everybody and everything: 'tis a privilege to be piloted by you," said Lord Montessor, sneeringly.

"*L'éclaireur du beau monde*," said the Princess, laughing, but still looking back at the Doghertys with renewed curiosity.

"Oh! but that woman is no joke," said the Colonel: "she puts me in a fever; I thought I had left her *plantée* at Brighton, and here she is."

"The Princess of Schaffhausen's carriage stops the way," was now re-echoed from below; and every head turned round at the announcement. The Princess passed on, and every eye followed her transit. Brighter forms and younger beauties squeezed and glided past unheeded; but the Princess was the queen of the season; and the eye of fashion followed her meteor course with the same ardour of interest as that with which science gazes on the uncalculated movements of some newly-discovered planet.

The sudden and brilliant appearance of the

Princess of Schaffenhhausen in the high circles of London, in the very heart of a season, in which social pleasure and political party had assumed an intensity and a development hitherto unknown in the domestic history of the country, had excited a considerable sensation in all its coteries, and a considerable interest in its highest and most exclusive cliques. At the moment of her arrival, a memorable revolution had been effected, which, in changing the character of the government, had overthrown the routine systems of the "old political post-horses;" and by rendering their customary agencies inapplicable, had thrown parties upon a course of experiments and expedients in search of new *points d'appui*, for the conservation of aristocratic power, and for successfully resisting the encroachments of popular claims.

Among these, the subtilty and finesse of female agency, and its corrupting influence at once over the passions and the mind, had been largely called on; and the system which marked the decline of absolute monarchy in France, and hastened the ruin of the restored dynasty of the Stuarts in England, was again revived, to avert

the downfall of a discomfited oligarchy. Different as were the states of society, and the objects to which intrigue was directed, still a parallel might be drawn between the cabinets of Versailles and of Whitehall, and the political coteries of present times; in each of which, pleasure and intrigue, frolic and faction, were so intimately blended as to blind the most observing, and serve the purposes of the most wily.

The threatened loss of one eminent *femme d'état*, which had been considered as a political calamity by the party for whom she laboured, seemed to be anticipated and indemnified by the arrival of another; and though the Princess of Schaffenhauseu had not yet presented her *note verbale*, nor made communication of any *protocole de conférence*—though she had delivered no credentials as one of the many plenipotentiaries *de quenouille* from the five great powers—still the idea gained ground that she was destined to succeed to the vacated appointment, and awaited her own good time for announcing her mission.

Younger, handsomer, more original, and, above all, more awakened to the changes impressed upon European society, she threw her dull but

zealous colleagues into shade. She took the tone of the times with an open boldness unknown to her astute predecessor ; and gave out lights that bewildered the councils of the set, who sometimes doubted whether she was in jest or earnest, or whether the priestess of absolute power was not the agent of ultra-liberalism.

She laughed at the old method of cyphers and insinuation, of taking thought by surprise, and mystifying the plainest transactions—the threadbare usages of the worn-out cabinets of Europe ! She spoke out that which others only whispered, and, keeping no terms with innovation, sometimes rendered her *outrés* doctrines fearful even to those most inclined to propagate and to practise them. Her *mots* had already passed into maxims, her aphorisms into proverbs ; and though some were startled by her declarations, that “ *la meilleure diplomatie est d’aller droit son chemin,*” and that “ *l’homme le plus franc est le plus fin,*” still she was adopted by the high party, as the child and champion of ultra-legitimacy ; while the *prestige* of her fashion rendered her suspected mission palatable even to the moderate.

The supposed disciple of the school of Metter-

nich was the more readily forgiven for the sake of her cook, who was of the school of Carême. Dinners of the most exquisite science on Mondays; suppers on Saturdays after the opera, like those of Louis XIV. after his *jours maigres*, from which she named them; and fantastic *bals costumés*, which she whimsically called her *Kermess*, (after the Dutch Ramadan of that name,) confirmed her vogue beyond the influence of rumour to shake it.

The Princess, too, if not a woman of genius, was of great and versatile talent,—a fine musician, an able linguist, and an artist of sufficient eminence to turn an accomplishment into a profession, should the rapid changes of the times, and the loss of her Belgian estates, ever drive her upon living by the exertion of her own high endowments. In a word, she was one to take the world unawares; and she had already made herself mistress of the season's vogue, before its patrons were conscious of her attack. The candidates for ton at any price, had canvassed her suffrage, and submitted to any humiliation to be enrolled among her guests. Her political admirers pinned their faith on her letters of pre-

sensation from foreign ministers (chiefly German), written in the usual style, in which more was insinuated than expressed ; and report had assigned her a position, before caution had instituted an inquiry, or prudence suggested a doubt as to her claims.

Wealth, which in England purchases the smile of insolent rank for coarse vulgarity, and places royalty itself at the table of the ambitious plebeian—wealth, judiciously distributed, had procured golden opinions for the patroness of arts, the contributor to public charities, and the hospitable Amphitryon of the most scientific table in London ; and the swords of half the younger brotherhood of the English aristocracy were ready “to start from their scabbards,” to defend the eccentricities of one who was possessed of the means of converting their high-born pauperism into princely independence.

It was rumoured that she had written a Commentary on Faust, a perfect system of metaphysical transcendentalism and of religious mysticism. An earl assiduously courted her for the honour of translating it ; a duchess canvassed the privilege of illustrating its pages ; and a

countess looked forward to a literary reputation, to be founded on her gracious permission to undertake the functions of her English editor ; while many of the fashionable party and publishers of the day laid their power of puffing and parade of criticism at her feet ; solicited her portrait for their " books of beauty," and " magazines of ton ;" announced her " contributions" to their rival albums and annuals with self-gratulations, and asserted the supremacy of her talents and her revenues over those of all other female writers of the age.

Still the Princess, with all her accessories, was rather a meteor than a fixed star ; more dazzling than appreciated, more imagined than understood. What she appeared was known even to the editors of newspapers, and to the reporters for second-rate fashionable journals ; what she really might be, had hardly yet been questioned by her most intimate associates.

From her first arrival in England, the Princess had formed part of a coterie, of which Lady Frances Mottram was a distinguished member. A sudden and very German friendship had been struck up between these two

persons ; the last, by their respective characters, to be suspected of assimilation. The incongruity was too startling not to be assigned by the world to some *arrière pensée* of the clever, meddling foreigner ; and the motive attributed was the bringing back Sir Frederick Mottram to a fold, from which his enemies and his friends equally supposed him to be straying.

Sir Frederick was well worth preserving. The arduous statesman and brilliant senator was gifted with talents which made him an object of consideration with all parties. He, however, whom Pitt had admired in his boyhood, and Canning praised while he was yet winning prizes in the schools of Oxford, was still wanting in that fixity of principle, that political *aplomb*, which, though often the result of an opacity of mind placing it beyond the reach of change, or a hardness of feeling inaccessible to the beauty of moral truth, is still indispensable to political consideration.

Sir Frederick Mottram's intellects were of too high an order to resist altogether the influence of new lights, and to push perseverance into obstinacy in error. But the great master-mover of

mind, volition, was wanting ; and placed by circumstances in the training of a particular party, he oscillated between temperament and opinion. The disciple of conservatism voted for Catholic emancipation ; and was accused of giving a blow to the constitution, even while he advocated its inviolability.

Sir Frederick Mottram was also a nervous and sensitive man, at once shy and impassioned. There were peculiarities in his position, which tended to render him the victim of a look, the martyr of a sneer ; and when the gossiping of the Carlton Club had bruited the imputed designs of the Princess in his behalf, his pride and principles alike took the alarm. Even before he had seen her, he had learned to hate, with all the energy of wounded and implacable self-love, this fashionable and diplomatic sibyl ; and her sudden intimacy with his wife was therefore at once suspicious and distasteful to him ; although it by no means followed that this intimacy could directly influence himself.

The life he had led with Lady Frances during six months of the year, seldom permitted their association. Lady Frances lived with a coterie

of ultra-fashion and ultra-politics : Sir Frederick lived in parliament and in the clubs : and those whom God had joined, and no man was to put asunder, seldom met, except by particular appointment ; and never from any desire to meet more frequently than the exigencies of society absolutely required. Their *mariage de convenance*, the barter of rank for wealth, had in twelve years' union produced no reciprocal feelings. Her *morgue* and insensibility, and his passionate sensitiveness and imaginative tastes, rendered compatibility impossible ; and never coming together but to disagree, nor parting but in dispute, she had possibly sought the Princess's acquaintance purposely to annoy him.

On the evening already noted, a singular chance had placed the Princess almost in personal contact with Sir Frederick Mottram, by the contiguity of the boxes they respectively occupied, during the performance of the 'Sylphide'; and the sarcasms levelled by the foreign aristocrat against the birth and principles of the English *parvenu*, confirmed an aversion which hitherto had been more a prejudice, than a sentiment sanctioned by reflection and avowed by reason.

CHAPTER II.

CARLTON-TERRACE.

A SULTRY summer's day, which had called forth the brilliant butterflies of fashion to swarm over the glittering waters of the Thames, had been followed by a heavy breathless evening, which had not prevented the same showy insects from swarming to the heated circles of the opera-house. A deluge of rain, the usual concomitant of this state of the London atmosphere, had commenced towards the close of the performance, and incommoded the beau monde at their departure, by falling between the carriages "and their nobility;" while it detained the more plebeian portion of the audience under the arcades, in long and patient observance of the large, frequent, and pattering drops. The deep rolling thunder, mingling with the shrill calls of link-boys, for numbered vehicles, and "coach

to the city!" outroared the more aristocratic demands for carriages decorated with half the ancient names of English history, and wholly overpowered the distant responses of drenched lackies and sulky coachmen.

"Lady Frances Mottram's carriage stops the way!" had been several times repeated in impatient and remonstrating vociferation, before a faded dowager of rank had descended the stairs, supported by a muffled member of an old regime of fashion, which had once made such duties imperative. She was followed by Lady Frances Mottram, who dashed forward upon the arm of an elegant boy (her *vis-à-vis* in the box). A "by-by" and an "*a rivederla*" hastily exchanged, the young cavalier returned to the Round-room; and the footman gave the word to "Lady Di Campbell's, Berkeley-square."

As the carriage drove off, a person capped and cloaked beyond the reach of recognition, burst through the crowd, and rushing over the gutters, and dodging through the maze of hurrying carriages (in utter neglect of *bas-à-jour*, and shoes almost as thin), strided along Pall Mall, and rang at the fashionably unknocked

door of one of the most magnificent mansions of Carlton-terrace.

The architectural vestibule of the patrician edifice, though wrapt in silence, was brilliantly illuminated. The master, Sir Frederick Mottram, passed rapidly through it, to a room equally silent, which was lighted by a Grecian lamp of purest alabaster, suspended from its gilt and sculptured ceiling. A pair of dim wax-candles had evidently shed their "pale and ineffectual lights" for some time over a marble table covered with piles of parliamentary papers, books and manuscripts—the lumber of public business and of private study.

This room was the working cabinet of the legislator ; the sole domestic retreat of the private man ; the *sanctum* of the man of letters and of art. Books, busts, pictures, the relics of the two great epochs of human history (the antique and middle ages), were here collected in unsparing profusion ; and, with the more serviceable details of luxury and magnificence dedicated to the ease and comfort of the body, presented to the imagination a strange contrast with the homely-wainscoted parlour, in which

Swift sought the Premier of the Augustan age of England, and (as he wrote to Stella) hung up his hat on a peg in the wall on entering : the contrast between the minds of the men was still more striking.

The perturbation of spirit and petulance of step of the lord of this beautiful apartment, as he entered, were strangely at odds with the tranquil genius of the spot. He flung his drenched cloak on a divan of purple velvet worthy of a Turkish seraglio ; and his cap on a bronze tripod that might have stood in the villa of Cicero. He slipped his feet into silken slippers worked in the looms of Persia ; and flinging himself into an arm-chair devised by luxury and executed by taste, he opened a book, which he had marked on the night before, for some interest in its pages, and some desire to return to them.

But he brought no mind to its perusal ; no power of attention to its subject. Laying down again the volume, he listened as if in impatient expectation ; all however was silent, and he again resumed his reading. The *buhl pendule* on the chimney-piece struck one, chim-

ing forth the quaint old air of "*Charmante Gabrielle*," the melody of times when men made love to psalm-tunes. Sir Frederick cast a glance at the time-piece, and flinging down for a second time the book, walked to the window of the veranda, which opened on the park.

The rain had called forth the thousand odours of the exotics which filled it. The refreshed but genial air acting on his fevered brow like the soft warmth of a tepid bath on the wearied limbs of the traveller, he stepped forth and threw his arms over the balustrade upon the terrace. It occupied the precise site where the Duchess of Cleveland had flirted from her balcony with Charles the Second, while De Grammont and St. Evremond paired off, as men who knew the world—the one to feed his subjects in the ponds, the other to read his last Madrigal to Mademoiselle Temple. The moon shining forth on the retreat of the heavy and massive clouds which had obscured the night, illuminated the towers of Westminster Abbey, the architectural miracles of the fifteenth century, as they rose over the dense masses of foliage

which mimicked the broad outline of forest scenery. In front, and partially seen through the trees, the broken waters of the rippling lake reflected the moonbeams in a thousand scattered and sparkling rays. The whole was an illusion, recalling distant times and distant regions; but what an illusion! in the heart of a great city, and at that hour and season,—the carnival of English fashion, the vigil of English pleasures and dissipation!

The scene was one to have charmed the coldest imagination; but it now failed to touch the warmest. Sir Frederick dragged forward the curtains with an impetuous hand, and shut it out, as he uttered an audible expression of disgust. There is a certain irritability of feeling, a disease of humour, that renders the calm of nature and the tranquillity of externals a personal insult.

He again took up his book—read—strided across his room—listened,—but heard only the distant roll of carriages, and the ticking of the pendule. *Le bon Roi Dagobert* chimed the second hour after midnight; and he now sat down to his writing-desk, and threw off

the following hot proof-impression of his agitated mind :—

“ TO THE LADY FRANCES MOTTRAM.

“ Two o'clock A. M.

“ You left me at the opera this evening under the impression that, after you had set down your aunt in Berkeley-square, you were to return immediately to your own house,—observe, for the first time, for many weeks, before daylight. Your promise was an evasion ; and you have added deception to disobedience. I take it for granted, you counted on my indifference to your movements, founded on your own carelessness to my feelings and wishes ; but that indifference must stop short of dishonour. You are now sharing in the orgies of a woman who has been characterised in her political career, as an “ *Intrigante par goût, par métier, et par besoin ;*” and who is as notorious for her vices, as distinguished by the misuse of talents, which render her a female Mephistopheles.

“ But why should I write this to you ? In a word, and to the point ; (for I am too ill and too weary to wait up any longer ; and I set off

by appointment at seven, to my poor sister Lady John's cottage, and shall not return till Monday :) I command you to break off this absurd and disgraceful alliance without further equivocation or delay. I know the Princess dines here to-day ; for I see her name, accompanied by others whom I despise and detest, on the list left on my table by Wilson. I will not outrage the usages, nor even the abuses of hospitality, by forcing you to put her off ; but, remember, she enters my house for the last time, or I never enter it again as long as you remain its mistress.

“FREDERICK MOTTEAM.”

“P. S. I insist on Emilius being sent back early to-morrow morning to Dr. Morrison's. The injury done to that unfortunate boy by bringing him home is incalculable, both to his mind and to his health. He shall not be the victim of an indulgence which has more of folly in it than of fondness. I shall write to Dr. M. to forbid his sending him here any more without my express and written permission.

“Once more, with respect to this Madame Schaffenhause, I am utterly free from all per-

sonal prejudice ; for I have never met her ; and should scarcely know her, were it not for the affectation of her dress and gesture : but that suffices.

“ F. M.”

The writing of this angry and indignant letter removed a weight of bitter and choking sensation : but it alluded only to one among many causes of deep-seated irritation ; and he folded, directed, and sealed it, with the same petulance with which it was written. He then rang the bell to send it to his wife's dressing-room, but rang in vain. He rang a second time with increasing violence ; and no one answered. The third time, the silken rope remained in his hand. The door then opened ; and he was on the point of bursting forth in a fit of angry inquiry, when the figure that appeared in the opening checked his utterance, and gave a change to the whole course of his humour.

In all the range of possibilities, no form less appropriate could have presented itself, at such an hour, in such a place, and to such a person. It was that of a man tall and gaunt, ragged and grotesque in his dress. A purple jacket, once

splendid, (the Mottram livery,) was dragged upon shoulders of such disproportionate dimensions, that the tight and torn sleeves terminated but a little below the elbow. The nether-dress, of buckskin, left a space between the old Wellington boot and the brawny knee, which a worsted stocking scarcely covered. A black stock, dandily put on, gave a military cast to a broad, florid face, as expressive of self-conceit as a passing emotion of timidity would allow. A rough, shock head was drawn up to serve as an attempt at an attitude; and while one hand held firmly by the lock of the door, the other less firmly grasped a postilion's cap, which presently fell with weight upon the floor, and lay without an attempt being made to pick it up. A deprecating smile played upon the uncouth, laughable face; and the whole man stood an epitome of self-possession, dashed with an agitating desire to produce an effect, which, to one acquainted with the true physiognomic indications of the unadulterated Milesian race, would have led at once to the conviction that the personage was an Irishman.

After the stare, the silence, and the amaze-

ment of a fully elapsed minute, Sir Frederick, in a sharp and startling voice, asked—

“Who are you, pray?”

He was answered in a subdued brogue, and Anglo-Irish mincing tone—

“Is it me, plaze your honor? It’s what I bees, the boy about the pleece, Sir Frederick—of coorse, sir—”

“What place?”

“The coort-yard, Sir Frederick; that is, the steebles, and your honor’s offices. You know yourself, sir.”

“Oh! a helper in the stables?”

“Not at all, axing your honor’s pardon,” he replied conceitedly, and drawing up his stock; “but does a turn by way of interteenment, till I gets into pleece, and to oblige your honor; and hopes you’re well, Sir Frederick—long life to you, and to Colonel Vere, and the Could-strames!”

“What brings you here?” said Sir Frederick, with some amazement and a little suspicion.

“What brings me here, plaze your honor? Why, what but to obligate Mr. Watkins, the porther, and sleep in his aisy chair; and minds

the dure, till it's what he comes in, which soon he will, plaze God—of coorse, Sir Frederick—”

“Ho! the porter is out, then, and has left you in care of the house?”

“He has; and I'd do more nor that for Mr. Watkins without fee or reward, and for yourself too, Sir Frederick: can I do anything for your honor now, sir?” And he advanced with an easy and gradually disengaged air towards the divan, shaking out and folding up the cloak, which he threw over his arm; and then drew up, as if for farther orders.

“Send the house-steward to me, and lay down that cloak!”

“He is gone to bed, your honor. And in respect of the cloak——” (laying it down.)

“Then send me the groom of the chambers,” said Sir Frederick, impatiently.

“Mr. Ellison is out at a party, with her ladyship's lady's-maid, Sir Frederick—but of coorse will be soon in.”

“Humph! So. Then send me the footmen,—Lady Frances's page—the butler,—any one.”

“The two footmen, sir, bees out with her leedyship's carridge; and the butler's at his

country-house; and th' under butler is gone with a coach for Ma'm'selle; and Master Francis is in bed, with a cold in his hid, poor little cratur!"

Sir Frederick thus learned that his house was abandoned by all his numerous train of servants, and actually left, at that advanced hour of the night, in the keeping of a ragged varlet, to all appearance the helper of the helper in the stables. After a minute's silence, he nodded off the whimsical intruder, whose countenance and gesticulations, during the ill-assorted dialogue, would have amused any other than one so little within the range of amusability.

The 'boy about the place,' who seemed to have fully reached his majority, after some farther fidgeting, closed the door, with a fantastical bow, and a solemn—"I shawl, Sir Frederick—of coorse."

"This is the sum-up of all," said the master of the deserted mansion, hastily recalling the man he had dismissed.

"Stay! come back. What is your name?"

"Lawrence Fegan, Sir Frederick; and I wonders, axing your honor's pardon, but you remimbers me."

"Remember you!"

"Ay, in troth! Sure I'm Larry Fegan, your ould little tiger, that was give you with the brown cab and cob by Colonel Vere, long ago, Sir Frederick, when he left the Could-strames, and came over from Dublin, with th' other baste."

"Are you the boy that fell from behind my carriage, in the Park, and broke his arm?"

"Why, then, sorrow one else, plaze your honor, but just my own self. It's what I've but little use of it iver since, to this blessed time."

"I ordered you to be taken care of."

"Long life to your honor!" was the vague reply, uttered with downcast eyes, and a sigh peculiarly Irish.

"I will see you again," said Sir Frederick; "you may go now."

Sir Frederick endeavoured to stifle some compunctious feelings for his own neglect of the sufferer, by apostrophizing the profligacy of his servants. "So much for the high life below stairs of London! Good heavens! what disorder! But is it wonderful, with such examples before them? or can one be surprised if the English aristocracy should hurry forward revolution by the heartless dissipation

of their time and fortunes, or undermine the very foundations of society by their wanton profligacy?"

He paused, sighed deeply, and then lighted his taper to go to bed : but in doing the office of his absent lamp-man, and extinguishing the lamp and candles, a glare of red light crimsoned the whole room. It was the morning sun, shining through the scarlet drapery of the windows. Sir Frederick drew the curtains for a moment aside ; then turned away, with a feeling which the most wretched might compassionate.

Having deposited his letter on his wife's toilet in her dressing-room, he was hurrying to his own apartment on the other side of the house, when he recollected that he had left his watch on the study-table. On returning, he perceived that the porter's chair was still occupied by Lawrence Fegan, who was already fast asleep. On the desk, beside him, lay a letter with a black seal. Sir Frederick took it. It was addressed to himself. The seal was sufficiently large to attract his attention, and its device caused a revulsion of his whole frame. He hurried back to his study, and read—

“ TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR F. MOTTRAM, BART.

“The writer of these lines takes the liberty of making the following inquiries :—Has Sir F. M. any recollection of a young female having been received into the family of the late Sir Walter and Lady M., about fourteen years ago, under circumstances singular, if not romantic? Was this person, at the expiration of a year, driven from Mottram Hall in a way not altogether creditable? Was it afterwards understood, that being reduced to a destitute condition, she fell into sickness; and that she was conveyed in a state of delirium to a parish workhouse, by the miserable and sordid wretches with whom she lodged, in the neighbourhood of Holborn, and that she died there?

“ If all this statement be true, would the humanity of Sir Frederick lead him to visit that workhouse, on receipt of this letter, and perform an act of charity, which may reflect with a blessed influence on his after life?—*videlicet*, to see that person, whose former wretchedness may have caused him some remorse; but who did not, as was supposed, then die. In her deli-

rium, she escaped from the spot — to which, after many years of strange vicissitude, she has again been brought by misery and the fatality of circumstances.

“ The writer is commissioned to express this poor woman’s desire to see Sir Frederick once more ; and has yielded to the weakness of a creature, still perhaps but too devoted to earthly ties, in forwarding her request, and enclosing the accompanying packet. The subjoined order will admit Sir F., without delay, to ward C of the parish workhouse of ——.”

The letter dropped from Sir Frederick’s hands, and with it the enclosure, which remained for a moment on the ground, where it had fallen ; at length he took it up, opened and found within it a ring, bearing on its enamel the flower called in French “ *la marguerite*,” and a motto in ancient and quaint language,

“ FORTUNE INFORTUNE FORT UNE.”

It was wrapped in a paper, which contained a memorandum in these words :—

“ I, Frederick Mottram, do of my free and uninfluenced will declare, that I will never

marry any other woman than —— —, as long as she remains single, and deems me worthy of her choice.

(Copy.) “ Mottram Hall, Jan. —, 18—.”

With the paper was another, thus inscribed :

“ I release Frederick Mottram from his engagement — an idle form, if the feeling that dictated it continue ; — an useless one, if it do not.

“ M.

“ — —.”

The emotions produced by the perusal of these documents, acting upon a mind already shaken by strong passion, had all the wildness and confusion of insanity. A rush of recollections awakened a long-subdued compunction, exciting a struggle between pride and feeling — between all that is worst and all that is best in humanity. Sir Frederick, however, felt what ought to be done, and he resolved on doing it. Putting up the papers, therefore, in his pocket, he resumed his shoes and cloak, took his hat and gloves, and went forth.

Larry Fegan was still sleeping in the porter's chair : neither Lady Frances nor the servants

had yet returned ; the lamps in the hall burned dimly before the morning's light. Sir Frederick shook the sleeper, who started from his slumber with a ludicrous attempt at self-possession.

" This letter with a black seal that I found here ; did *you* receive it ? "

" The letter, sir ? " said Larry, roughing up his hair and winking his eyes ; " of coorse, sir ! What letter, plaze your honor ? "

" This letter ; it was on the desk. Did you take it in ? when did it come ? who brought it ? "

" It was myself took it in, and nobody else knows a screed of it," said Fegan, with an expression of countenance inimitable in its humour, intelligence, and arch significance.

" Who brought it ? " reiterated Sir Frederick, raising his voice angrily.

" Why thin, Sir Frederick, it was a faymale—a leedy in a hackney-coach."

" A lady ! What sort of a lady ? "

" Axing your pardon, Sir Frederick, did iver you see one of the leedies of the House of Mercy, in Baggot-street, Dublin ? Well, sorrow a bit but it was just that same sort, sir—a kind of a blessed and holy woman. The like I niver saw

in London, before or since ; and wishes myself back in Dublin oncet more."

After a moment's pause, Sir Frederick looked around him, and, lowering his voice, asked, "Is there a possibility of getting a hackney-coach at this hour?"

"Of coorse there is—every possibility in life, your honor. A crony of mine, one Darby Doolan, from Dublin, bees keeping one up all night, in St. James's-street. I'll just run and bring Darby round in a moment to the door, sir."

He had put on his black cap, and was darting forward, when his master, laying his hand on his arm, exclaimed—

"Not here—not at this door—stop in Pall-mall, near the Travellers' Club."

The contrast between his white-gloved hand and the ragged dirty sleeve of the *locum tenens* of the porter of Mottram House, was not more strange than that of the two persons thus accidentally brought into conference, each at the extreme degree of social separation.

"Is it near the Thravellers' ?—Oh ! very well, sir—I see—I'll be there and back in a jiffy."

Fegan flew forth, and Sir Frederick, drawing

his hat over his eyes, and his cloak round his shoulders, looked for a moment cautiously around ; and, with an almost unconscious self-congratulation that neither his wife nor servants had yet returned, he went forth.

As he crossed the plank which formed a temporary passage from Carlton-terrace into Pall-mall, he encountered his own hall-porter, who, being too drunk to recognise his master, disputed the pass with him. He was hurrying home from a public-house near St. James's-square, (where he had been carousing,) to resume his post before his lady's arrival.

The carriages were still rolling from clubs, *soirées*, *thécs*, opera-suppers, and gambling-houses of various descriptions, public and private ; many of them filled by the orthodox and consistent voters for the permanence of tithes, and for Sir Andrew Agnew's Bills for the due observance of the Sabbath. One among the splendid equipages bore the Mottram arms. The two sleepy footmen, in Sir Frederick's rich livery, swung behind ; and the pale, faded face of Lady Frances (white as the pearl that glistened in her fair, uncurled tresses) was visible within. A

broken exclamation rose upon her husband's lips; but he felt that, at that moment, he had no right to accuse.

He hurried on. The bottom of St. James's-square was still choked with the carriages of the company at the Princess Schaffenhause's. Apprehensive of being seen, and impatient for the arrival of Fegan's coach, he continued to walk backward and forward near the Palace, until, seeing a carriage approaching half-way down St. James's-street, he crossed to meet it. The next moment he found himself surrounded by a group of men issuing from King-street; among whom were the Marquis of Montessor, Lord Alfred, Lord Allington, Captain Levison, and two young noblemen, the husbands of two of the handsomest women in England. His *incognito* air had drawn the attention of the revelers; but they soon made him out, and found a resistless source of fun in detecting the great commoner, the most moral man in Europe, in apparent *bonne fortune*—for in such set phrases was he saluted by each alternately, with many profligate inuendoes, and loud shouts of laughter-loving frolic.

"Pray let me pass!" he exclaimed, in uncontrollable annoyance; "I have been called upon to visit a dying friend."

"Male or female?" said Lord Montessor.

"How delighted I am," said Lord Alfred, "to see some touch of humanity about the frozen man dug out of the glaciers of St. Bernard, as the Princess calls you!"

"Nay, nay, we must not discourage a young beginner: let him pass," said the Marquis, laughing.

"Lady Frances is still at the Princess's," cried Captain Levison; "so you may as well turn into Crocky's, as you are out for a lark."

With a look and manner not to be mistaken, Sir Frederick shook the young Guardsman off.

"Gentlemen, you *must* allow me to pass," he said; and striding off, he left the party, to proceed up the street.

"He is growing serious," said Lord Alfred; "and is going to early prayers."

"I don't think that," said Lord Allington, "for he voted against Sir Andrew's Sunday Bill."

"A man may do that, and be very serious too; as, for instance,"—said Lord Alfred, and he nodded at the Marquis.

The party laughed loudly, and turned in to finish their Saturday night, or Sunday morning, with 'the Fishmonger.'

Sir Frederick had reached the top of St. James's-street, when he was met by a hackney-coach, with Larry Fegan's ragged elbow and important face thrust through the open window. The carriage drew up; Fegan popped out, and, with the readiness of an accomplished footman, let down the step, closed the door, and, touching his postilion's cap, asked,

"Where to, Sir Frederick?"

"To Holborn," was the reply.

Fegan looked amazed, repeated the order, sprung up behind the carriage, and, swinging his tall figure by two dirty straps, assumed an air which a royal lackey might be proud to imitate on a drawing-room day.

The coach stopped at the foot of Holborn-hill, and Larry presented himself at the carriage-side.

"I did not want you," said Sir Frederick, somewhat surprised; "you may return."

Fegan looked mortified; Sir Frederick took out his purse and gave him a sovereign, adding,

"I do not wish what has passed to-night to be talked over in my stables."

"Oh! of coorse—intirely not," said Fegan archly.

Desiring the coachman to wait his return, Sir Frederick proceeded with a hurried step, and his glass to his eye, on his devious and uncertain way, through many obscure lanes and dirty allies, and occasionally directed by a loiterer,—when he happened to find one. Misery and degradation met him at every step. He paused in disgust and horror, uncertain how to proceed, and almost inclined to turn back.

"If you want Mr. Johnson's, you must turn to the left," said a suspicious-looking man, pointing towards a low house, or "finish," the last resort of subaltern debauchees, and the nocturnal haunt of those profligates of both sexes who dare not encounter 'the garish eye of day.'—"Stay, sir," he continued, "I'll call a comrade;" and he turned into one of those frightfully splendid gin-palaces, to which philosophy assigns the ruin of the infatuated and miserable classes who support them. The blaze of light

emitted from its highly ornamented gas-burners, as the opening door disclosed the scene within, triumphed over the brightness of the rising sun. The 'comrade' came forth, smoking a cigar. He was all skin and bone, rags, filth, and stench. He approached Sir Frederick with familiarity, in the supposed community of vice, saying,

"Mr. Johnson's house!—this way, sir, please."

"No! I want to go to the workhouse of ——— parish."

"Oh! very well, you are quite close to it. I'll show you,—to the right, sir,—take care of that loose stone. You're come to look for a 'prentice among the younkens, I suppose? Plenty to be had there, warranted sound, wind and limb."

He pointed to a placard over the gates in the centre of a high wall, on which was written, "Strong, healthy boys and girls, with the usual fee. Apply within."

"You'll be paid for taking them, you see," hiccuped the wretched creature.

Sir Frederick pulled violently the bell; the gate opened, and he passed in. The cicerone receiving triple what he expected for his brief

services, winked, as he withdrew, at the sulky porter—sulky from being called from his lair at so early an hour. Sir Frederick followed across the yard. A few wretched children, a fragment of the hundred and fifty thousand houseless orphans who prowl about the streets of London, to beg or steal, were already assembled. Vice lowered on their young brows, and want sat on their ghastly cheeks. An idiot woman seized his arm.

“You shan’t beat me !” she said with a loud laugh ; and, jerking him from her with violence, she reeled and fell.

“Never mind her, sir,” said the porter, who had taken the order of admittance, and was reading it. “Never mind her ; she will recover of herself.”

Sir Frederick sickened. He raised the maniac from the ground, and placing her on a seat, followed his conductor into the house. At the entrance stood a plain dark chariot, apparently that of a physician. Its appearance was a relief to the unnerved, unmanned visitor.

“The hospital ward, letter C,” muttered the man, as he gave the order to an old nurse whom he met at the door.

“ Oh ! the gentleman as was to see the poor governess, mayhap. It’s all over with her now ! Howsomdever, this way, sir.”

They proceeded along a dark passage, which admitted them into a long narrow room, dimly lighted by a few dusky windows on one side. A fire-place at either end was surrounded by a few withered old women engaged in some culinary process, and pushing each other away, in the true unaccommodating selfishness of solitary misery. Each had her little tin vessel, preparing some supplemental *friandise* furnished by the charitable to eke out the insipid, if not scanty, nutriment provided by the institution. They were all marked by mutilation, infirmity, or that ‘ great disease,’ old age. The narrow and uncurtained beds on either side were tenanted by the sick and the dying. One only showed a young and a blooming countenance. It was a girl of about eighteen, who had occupied that bed for twelve years, as the nurse who accompanied the visitor declared.

“ She has lost the use of her limbs, sir, and having no friend on earth to move her, she remains constantly bedridden ; and has seen many a neigh-

bour conveyed to her last home, poor thing !
There, sir, is the bed you inquire for, No. 14."

She then hurried off to obey the pressing call of some impatient patient at the farther end of the room. The bed No. 14 was covered from head to foot with a clean white sheet, on which shone a ray of sun-light from the opposite window. Under this simple covering appeared the outline of a human figure. Beside it, knelt a female in a black mantle and hood. An ejaculation of horror burst from the lips of the visitor, wholly unused to such scenes, and now so agitated and shaken. He stood for a moment at the foot of the bed, covering his face with his handkerchief, and articulated with difficulty, "I am come, then, too late !"

"Too late !" muttered emphatically the woman, rising slowly from her knees, and remaining motionless beside the bed of death. There was a silence of more than a minute.

"Is there anything to be done which may testify" The scarcely articulate voice of the speaker could not, or did not, proceed.

"Nothing," was the low but stern reply.

"Money may be deposited for"

"The parish finds a coffin," interrupted one who seemed to belong as little to this world as the inanimate remains which she hung over.

A cold shudder crept through Sir Frederick's veins at the abrupt answer. There was another pause, awkwardly protracted.

"Were you her friend?" at length inquired Sir Frederick.

"Charity and duty brought me to this asylum of misery two days back. The poor have no friends, save Heaven," she added, lowering her eyes and crossing herself. "The story of this wretched person, her sufferings, and her wrongs (for she was of a class of sufferers and used to wrongs), moved me much. They are now over in this world!" And she clasped her hands and bent her head.

"And for ever, be it hoped!" said Sir Frederick, with a burst of uncontrollable and solemn emotion.

"Her sins be forgiven her! for she loved, as she suffered, much," slowly murmured the pious woman, who was evidently one of a peculiar religious order, which, though not recognised by the laws of England, exists there, as throughout

the rest of the Christian world, doing good by stealth, and fearing, probably, as much as 'blushing to find it fame.'

The infected atmosphere, the images of misery, sickness and death, were becoming too much for the heart and the imagination of a visitant so unpractised in haunts like this. He had felt and suffered more, perhaps, in the petty space of time he had passed in this chamber of woe, than he had ever done in his life. His breathing, too, was becoming oppressed, and his strength was failing him: but, aware of his situation, he made an effort to rouse himself, and said,

"I trust, madam, you will not allow an acquaintance, begun under such affecting circumstances, to drop here. You have probably been put into the confidence of my late unfortunate friend, and——"

"Was she *your* friend?" asked the woman, in a tone of almost contempt.

"Will you allow me to call on you?" was the evasive answer. "You were, of course, the writer of the letter which"

"Yes, I wrote, and brought it, when this poor woman was at her agony."

"Will you allow me, then, an opportunity of thanking you for your humanity? Where shall I call on you?"

"I have no home! I was once like her," (pointing to the corpse,) "homeless from necessity: I am now so from choice. But *you* have a splendid and a happy home. I will call on *you*."

Sir Frederick started, unconscious alike why he had made his own proposition, or why he was disturbed by hers. "I am leaving town," he said faintly.

"I will wait your return," said the female; and she knelt down and buried her face in her hands, as if to cut short the interview.

Sir Frederick, after a short pause, retired. The old nurse, with sordid hopes and watchful eyes, accompanied him to the door. In passing by the bed of the youthful invalid, he involuntarily paused, and asked if there was anything she wished for. She replied, with a hectic flush and sparkling eye—"Tea."

He threw a sovereign on the bed, gave another to the nurse, and hurried, almost without knowing how, to the street where he had left the

carriage. Larry Fegan was still there, standing with the door in one hand, and his cap in the other.

"I desired you to go away!" said Sir Frederick, in a tone of displeasure.

"Sure, your honor, would I lave you to be murdered in that thieving-place, axing your honor's pardon?"

"Shut the door, and stop in Charing-cross," said Sir Frederick, in a subdued voice.

He threw himself back in the carriage, and it drove on.

CHAPTER III.

THE DRESSING-ROOM.

WHOEVER would search into by-gone ages for the most undeniable evidences of what the French call "*les mœurs*," will find them better preserved in material monuments than in written records. Domestic habits escape the historian; and when time, by tinting them with its own picturesque hues, commends them to the curiosity of the antiquary, their remembrance has already become vague and evanescent. But tangible objects, escaping from the wreck of the past, are pregnant with inference; and they illustrate the progress of society on points which the historiographer neglects, and the poet despises.

The wants of man are, in fact, his great teachers; and the modes he may have adopted

for meeting them are infallible indices of his real position in the scale of civilization: for his last point of social refinement is but a more perfect development of some physical resource, and his highest flight of science only a better application of his power in administering to his necessities.

But if annalists have done little for the domestic history of mankind, (so pleasant to read in the preserves of antique chateaux and Gothic mansions,) posterity is the more indebted to the garrulous memoir-writers and quaint diarists, whose *naïve* and simple vanity has found an interest in the minutest details. The charming gossip of Dame Alienoure de Poitiers, the *Sieur Brantome*, Evelyn, and Pepys, in throwing open the domestic interior of other ages, have enabled us to judge better of the superiority of our own; and have, by their unsuspecting testimony, destroyed the *prestige* which time had thrown over the morals, the manners, the accommodations, and the wisdom of our ancestors.

The charming pages of writers of this class teem with illustrations of the monuments of domestic art; and the monuments, in turn, be-

come the best commentaries upon their texts. It is thus that much philosophy may be deduced from furniture, and that rooms may be read like records. The *dressoir*, in one age the highest mark of rank in the chambers of aristocracy, but now found only in the kitchen—and the *chaise-à-dos*, once exclusively reserved for royalty, but now rejected as an uneasy seat even by a second-rate tradesman, are sensible and convincing images of the progressive destiny of the species; of the necessity of innovation; and of the hopelessness and the folly of all attempts to throw chains round the mind of man.

Neither the marble palaces of Rome, nor the stately hotels of Paris, radiant in the golden *rococo* of the most gorgeous of all epochs, will stand a moment's comparison with the domiciles of the simplest gentleman of the present times, for light, air, cleanliness or comfort; and the wondrous contrivances for convenience, for safety, and for health, which mark this world of difference, (supplied by the mechanical arts at the call of utility and under the guidance of science,) are but the material and tangible results of that much-dreaded political liberty, which is, in truth

and in fact, synonymous for civilization and for happiness.

Of this verity, the manor-house of Mottram in the county of Northampton, and the mansion of Sir Frederick Mottram on Carlton-terrace, were notable illustrations. The manor of Mottram (a Saxon appellative preserved by the Norman adventurers, who at the Conquest obtained the fief) had been brought to the hammer by the representative of fourteen barons and of thirty-two quarterings ; and being purchased by a Birmingham manufacturer, reverted to a descendant of the Saxon family, its original founders, whose successive representatives, deprived of their ancient possessions, had fallen from their high estate, and become an obscure and unnoted portion of the plebeian population of the country.

Sir Walter Mottram, baronet, had started in life the porter of a mercantile and manufacturing house in Birmingham, of which he died the opulent and sole head ; and having added to the commoner virtues of industry and prudence, so necessary to advancement in trading life, a high combining faculty, a genius for

commerce, a cool courage, and a sound judgment, he had raised one of those colossal fortunes, which, scarcely perhaps equalled in Tyre, Carthage, or the commercial republics of the middle ages, form one of the most distinguishing characters of the passing century in England.

The old baronial edifice, of which Sir Walter became the proprietor, had been preserved with religious care ; and the refitted interior, though in strict keeping with the genius of the place, exhibited every species of improvement derivable from modern taste and science. The wealth of Sir Walter, the fanciful taste of his wife, and the acquired *virtù* of their only son, had rendered Mottram Hall another Houghton. The gallery was scarcely less rich in precious pictures ; and its library was already noted, in the *catalogues déraisonnés* of bibliomaniacs, as among the choicest and rarest in the kingdom.

The house on Carlton-terrace, on the contrary, was altogether as new as the honours of its classical master. The ground on which it stood had been acquired in acquittal of a debt due to the father ; and the house (built

under the immediate direction of the son) was an illustration of a system of his own, which combined the maximum of splendour with the greatest possible enjoyment. For Sir Frederick Mottram, nature and education had done much, though birth (in the conventional sense of society) had done nothing. A purer judgment never presided over that most delightful of enterprises (the pride of Pliny and the boast of Cicero), the construction of a home suited to the 'elegant desires' of early manhood, and to the enjoyment of reposing age. Youth, in its first outburst of life, indulges no such views: its passions are all abroad; with curiosity, like an *avant-courier* galloping in the van, it bivouacks in the desert, or revels in the kiosk; while experience lags slowly in the rear, but finally and inevitably lures back, through ways which satiety tracks and disenchantment roughens.

Sir Frederick Mottram had passed through this fitful and capricious stage of existence, and he believed himself now fitted to live and to enjoy. He had, in his early youth, been a literary enthusiast, a devotee at the shrine of art; in a word,

the true son of a woman of genius, from whom he had received an organization which led to illusions he almost regretted, as being well worth the soberer realities of a too calculating philosophy. On the breaking up of the temple of royal profligacy and extravagance in Pall-mall, he had chosen that site for his town-mansion, as much on account of its thousand historical associations, as of the conveniences of the locality. St. James's Palace and Park, Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall, Whitehall, its gardens and river scenery, recalled to his glowing fancy the poetry, the history, the gallantry, and the beauty of England,—the shrine of the Church's power—the cradle of a race of kings—the scaffold of one despot and the harem of another,—the scene where the greatest energies enacted the greatest drama that ever was represented in the cause of civil and religious freedom !

In the mansion of this rich commoner and staunch stickler for high English morality, there was one irregularity ; namely—that the apartments of his wife were mounted upon the same style of luxury and voluptuousness as

those of the mistress of Charles the Second, the too-celebrated Duchess of Portsmouth. The dressing-room of Lady Frances was indeed a fac-simile of 'the glorious apartment' recorded by Evelyn, whose words are well worth substituting for a modern description; and they are equally suited to the purpose, excepting only the presence of the royal lover.

"Following his Majesty this morning through the gallerie, I went, with the few who attended him, into the Dutchesse of Portsmouth's dressing-roome, within her bed-chamber; where she was in her morning loose garment, her maids combing her, newly out of bed, his Majesty and the gallants standing about her. But that which engaged my curiosity, was the rich and splendid furniture of this woman's apartment, now twice or thrice pulled down and rebuilt to satisfie her prodigal and expensive pleasures, while her Majesty's does not excede some gentlemen's ladies, in furniture and accommodation. Here I saw the new fabriq of French tapisry, for designe, tendernesse of worke, and incomparable imitation of the best paintings, beyond anything I ever beheld. Some pieces had Ver-

sailles, St. German's, and other palaces of the French King, with huntings, figures, and land-skips, exotiq fowls ; and all to the life, rarely don. Then for Japan cabinets, screenes, pendule clocks, greate vases of wrought plate, tables, stands, chimney furniture, sconces, branches, braseras, &c. all of massive silver and out of number, besides some of her Majesty's best paintings."

In such a room, a few hours after Sir Frederick Mottram had returned from the ward of St. ——'s workhouse, sat his wife Lady Frances, sunk in the depths of her cushioned gondola. A *déjeuné* of French vermeil stood on a *guéridon* beside her; and her husband's letter (not opened till a few moments before) was in her hands. Low, languid, in all the depression incidental to the excitement of the previous evening, and scarcely able to decipher the petulantly scrawled characters, she threw it carelessly and contemptuously down, with a yawn, and a muttered "Oh ! a jobation — tiresome !" A beautiful paroquet, perched on the back of her chair, solicited her attention by the reiterated demand of, "*Aimes-tu Coco ?*" to which she replied, in

tones almost passionate, "*Oui, je t'aime, mon petit Coco !*"

"*C'est à s'y tromper,*" said Félicité (who was in waiting), with a significant smile.

Lady Frances smiled too ; and then drawing her *peignoir* round her swan-like neck, and wrapping her fine form in a *robe-de-chambre*, which the Duchess of Abrantes would have described with truth to be '*mousseline d'Inde, brodée au jour, double rose de Mai,*' she closed her heavy eyes, and resigned her aching head to the hands of one as exhausted, languid, and nerveless as herself: Mademoiselle Félicité having only returned from *her* ball in time to light the tapers on the toilet of her lady, and to be ready for her reception at five in the morning.

When Félicité complained of a '*crispation des nerfs,*' she was dismissed to her *tisane* at the steward's room breakfast-table ; and after the lapse of an hour, when green tea and dear St. John's revivifying drops had somewhat restored the animal spirits of Lady Frances, she again took up her husband's letter, and read it through, with a running commentary of "*pishes !*" — "*pshaws !*" — "*bahs !*" — and "*so very tire-*

somes." It frightened her, however, into reflection.

She had lived with her husband for some years in utter estrangement—he for public, she for fashionable life. Her extravagance and folly were rebuked only when long tradesmen's bills came in and were discharged. Their one whimsical, consumptive child was scarcely a tie between them. To Sir Frederick he was a source of deep mortification—to Lady Frances, a subject of sentimental fondness; undisturbed, however, by any doubts of his rapid recovery, under the care of the infallible Esculapius of her coterie. Sir Frederick had hitherto but rarely interfered with her follies, nor she with his politics; though her friends were ultra conservatives, and he had latterly approached somewhat towards liberalism, by his vote on the Relief Bill; and had consequently in some degree lost caste with those who accuse Sir R. Peel of tergiversation, and 'the Duke' of having given the first blow to 'our glorious constitution.'

But there was in this letter a tone of unprecedented severity, which alarmed, if it did

not touch her. Her first thought was to send for the Princess of Schaffenhauseu, from a recent habit of dependence created by the influence of the foreigner's energetic mind on her constitutional indolence; but a moment's consideration convinced her of the danger of such a proceeding. She placed herself therefore before her *secrétaire*, and drawing, from under the golden clasps of a splendid portfolio, a packet of tiny note paper breathing and blushing roses, she peured forth her fears and doubts to Georgina, Marchioness of Montessor — one whom the 'Age' had that morning characterised as a 'certain profligate and pious peeress of Belgrave-square;' and whom another Sunday paper, 'The Christian Woman's Vade-Mecum,' had named 'the Fair Samaritan,' for some act performed under the dictation of the *tartuffe*, its editor.

The history of fashionable note-writing is a page in the history of the times, as highly illustrative of the manners of the great as any other of more seeming import. In the first go-cart steps of mind, to write a letter was no trifling occurrence: it was a task to undertake, a proof

of learning to accomplish, a sign of high calling or eminent birth to desire. Kings and queens, peers, prelates, and ministers, indited letters as guarded as protocols, stiff as exercises, and ceremonious as a herald king-at-arms. But no one dreamed of the familiar intercourse of mind upon paper.

The epistolary correspondence of private friends was revived in that most social of all regions, France; and it owed its origin, as most pleasant, if not wise things do, to woman. Letters, in their modern form, uses, and appliance, first became a fashion in the seventeenth century, and in the court of Louis XIV.; and the first eminent professors of the charming art were Madame de Sévigné, and her contemporaries, Mesdames La Fayette, de Coulanges, de l'Enclos, de Maintenon, and others.

When there was no periodical press, no public journals, no printed channels for political or social information, the correspondence of women of fashion, of "*la cour et la ville*," supplied their place; but, as yet, the necessity of daily, hourly note-writing, with its consequent

éloquence du billet, was not surmised. It was reserved to England, in the nineteenth century, to strike out such a mystery; * and the whole business of high society in London is now carried on by the instrumentality of reams of the smallest paper, of every hue of the rainbow — sometimes the circulating medium of thought, feeling, fancy — but oftener of folly, falsehood, and idleness.

The genius of note-writing is not inseparably connected with any other genius. Its merit is a facile narration of frivolous facts, requiring no ideas, and demanding no wit. The dullest dames are often the most voluminous note-writers; and they get rid of their garrulity upon paper, with the same strenuous idleness with which they discharge it in verbal exuberance in society. Every coterie (and the society of London is divided into coteries, each with its

* The gossiping intercourse of fine ladies was formerly conducted by servants—a custom alluded to by Archer, in the ‘*Beaux Stratagem*,’ where he details what he calls a ‘*How-do-ye*,’ to be delivered *vivâ voce*, from his mistress to her friend. The allusion will soon be lost in England, though in Italy the usage of long complimentary messages is still retained.

autocrat, its politics, and its prejudices,) has its own style of billet, made up of conventional phrases, *petits mots d'énigme*, *sobriquets*, &c.—the dictionary of its daily, or rather nightly, interviews.

Among the most distinguished of these co-teries was that of which the Marchioness of Montessor and Lady Frances Mottram were the heads; and their morning correspondence on the subject of Sir Frederick's letter will furnish an appropriate illustration of an art which has reached the last finish of its frivolous perfection.

“ TO THE MARCHIONESS MONTRESSOR.

“ DEAREST GEORGY,—Do come to me, if you can. If you are too delicate or too pious to dine out on Sundays, at least look in on me after church. I want you most particularly, and cannot go to Arlington-street, because I am regularly done up, after this last week. Besides, I have really no means of going out, or I would try and go to you to-night. Sir Frederick has taken the second coachman to Lady John's; and Saunders says he has got the influenza, from being out all night, and every night this week :

but Félicité says he's sulky, because he lost five hundred to the Duke's coachman at Epsom. Servants are becoming really too bad.

"But I have got into such a mess, dear!— Sir Frederick is grown so tiresome and ill-tempered, you have no idea. If by chance you have seen your husband or Lord Aubrey to-day, they must have told you of the scene in the Round-room last night. It was vulgar and brutal, and a great triumph to the Greenfelts, the tiresome M'Querys, and other quizzes whom I have cut this season. Unluckily, I did not get home from the dear Princess's *media-noche* (which was beyond beyond) till four this morning. Sir F. sat up till three, and then wrote me *such* a note, you have no idea! In short, it is becoming no joke: he hinted at separation if I did not give up the Princess; and all sorts of nonsense about her bad reputation, as if she was worse than other foreign women of her rank and fortune.

"Now I want you most particularly to give me your advice. You and Lord Aubrey are so *very* clever on such points, and he won't dine here if you don't. Most unluckily, Claude

Campbell, too, who came up to the opera last night without leave from the royalties, was obliged to scamper back to Kew from the Princess's. So, dear, I have no one whose advice I can ask, or take, but yours. But I'm resolved not to give in: if I once *do that*, the game is up. Don't you think so?

"The worst of it is, I want money terribly. I'm up to my eyes in debt to Howell and James, to Carson, and to Storr and Mortimer, for all sorts of *misères*; and cousin Claude Campbell has settled for me, all this season, at the Dowager Dunstable's *écarté* table. Poor boy! he is a delight of a cousin! But we have hit on such a scheme—a racing-table!

"Observe, I don't want to provoke Sir F. *too far*; but I won't give up the 'High Transparency,' as Alfred Montessor calls her, for a thousand reasons. If our summer tour goes on, her castle on the Rhine, or somewhere, will be worth anything: so I must humour the '*house meestre*,' as the Princess calls Sir F., who, by the bye, has never seen her. He is so prejudiced; and she hides so drolly when he comes into the house; for she either hates or fears him.

Now, send Lord Aubrey to me, if he is with you, or write me a few lines; for I must make up my mind before to-morrow morning, as I am off at one o'clock for aunt Di Campbell's *déjeûné* at Richmond, where the Duke and Duchess, and Claude, and all the world, are coming.

"Day, day, dear !

"Yours, FRANCES M."

"P.S.—Will your *thé* really go on to-night? They were saying at the opera, that good Mrs. Medicot was urging you to give up your Sunday *thés*, and to cut poor dear Aubrey into the bargain; and the Princess said something in French about rouge and the president,* that was so droll it set them all laughing.

"On consideration, I send you Sir Frederick's letter, by Hippolyte (for, *entre nous*, I can trust no one else); you will then be able to judge.

"F. M."

* "*Pour ce qui est du rouge et du président, je ne leur ferai point l'honneur de les quitter:*" the observation of Madame du Deffand in her own attempt at reformation.

Answer.

“ TO LADY FRANCES MOTTRAM.

“ I keep your page, dear child, to take this back, as I do not let my servants out on Sundays, except to church. I heard all about the *scena* in the Round-room—not from the inseparables, for I have not seen my husband or Lord Aubrey to-day. I had not come from church, when they looked in. I *did* hear it though, in full, from Lady Anastatia M'Query, just as I was getting into my chair, in the porch of St. James's, (like Clarissa, I am never too ill to go to church). She thrust her long scraggy neck down into the chair, and smelt so of garlic, (you know all the ladies M'Query eat Bologna sausages for breakfast,) that I have been obliged to have the chair fumigated; and caught fresh cold by letting the window down coming across the square. She was full of the scene last night. She said, that Sir Frederick actually dragged you away by the arm; that cousin Claude came to the rescue, and that the Princess clapped you on the back, and cried ‘*Courage, mon enfant!*’ and then, alluding to Sir

Frederick's plebeian origin, she exclaimed, 'Hey ! mi Leddy Montessor, — but the Duke is weel servit : a pretty alliance for Lady Frances de Vere ! what would you ha fra' a cat but her skin ?'

" Well, my child, this is all very bad, I allow. Such things give a *ridicule ineffaçable* ! but remember, no separation ! mind that. First, in a religious point of view, separation is sinful : as St. Paul says, in dear Mrs. Medlicot's ' Tracts of Ton,' ' Let not the wife depart from the husband.' Besides, there is all the difference in the world, dear, between a princely mansion in Carlton-terrace and a ' box' in Cadogan-place, or a *sweet little* cottage at Tonbridge : and believe me, Fanny sweetest, it will come to that. Remember Lady Ascot, who parted from her husband, intact as to character, and from mere incompatibility of temper ; yet how she went down ! Who ever hears or speaks of her now, though she has a house at Brighton, and goes to the Queen's balls ? Nothing should induce you to part from Sir Frederick. Your conscience tells you, that you are innocent, and Sir F. wrong—I do not dispute it ; and there are many reasons to warrant your oppos-

ing his vulgar caprices and plebeian prejudice ; the more extraordinary in the son of an actress, who, of course, was not over rigid. But remember, ' all things that are lawful are not expedient,' as Mrs. Medicot says ; and as the Princess is going away, and actually leaves London for the Continent at the end of the season, I would make a virtue of necessity, and offer to give her up at once. The Princess knows all the bitter things Sir Frederick says of her, and would be the first to laugh at your hesitating. Do anything rather than come to a separation, which is foolish, vulgar, and highly irreligious.

" I shall give tea as usual ; it is now almost the only peep at the world my health, and indeed my way of thinking, allow me to take. You must come, child. Some of your dinner folk will bring you ; and your brother, who will be here, will set you down. But remember, love, *I do not receive till ten minutes after midnight.*

" I will not keep your pretty page any longer. What a nice boy ! I have had him up in my dressing-room, and talked to him of his catechism. He knows nothing ; so I have given

him Mrs. Medlicot's 'Tracts for the Domestic of Noble Houses.' "

" P. S.—Don't talk of my *thé* before the Princess. I really cannot ask her, *en petit comité*; she talks so freely on serious subjects, like all foreigners: and Mrs. Medlicot means to bring Kitty Conran, the Irish saint, as she is called. It is all the fashion to have her. I return your husband's jobation. By the bye, he was seen in a very equivocal situation, getting into a hackney-coach at three this morning. Make Alfred Montessor tell you all about it. G. M."

Lady Frances was still reading the pale, blue pages of Lady Montessor's epistle, when the Princess of Schaffenhauseu was announced. Lady Frances huddled up her letter; but not before the Princess's quick eye detected the action.

" I see I am *de trop*," she said, throwing herself into an arm-chair opposite to Lady Frances, after having kissed her cheek. " That letter interests you; and I don't—*now*."

" *Comment, ma belle!* You always interest me."

" No—no—finish your letter, *ma petite*, and then we'll talk. It is from Lady Montessor.

Stay, you have dropped an enclosure—*protocole de mari!*”

Lady Frances coloured, and opened her eyes.

“How do you know that?”

“I am just come from Arlington-street; and the Marchesa has put me into your confidence.”

She laughed, sunk back in her chair, laid her elbows on its arms, clasped her fingers, and fixed her friend with eyes of no ordinary expression and penetration.

“How very foolish!” said Lady Frances, much annoyed.

“Not at all foolish, child—only false. You are all *that, vous autres*. You betray each other, for ever, in your idleness and garrulity. There is no point of honour in your coteries; for, if rogues can sometimes be true to each other, roguesses never can. Your friendships are but masked rivalries. By the bye, why do you muffle yourself up in that *chevaux-de-frise* of lace and ribbon? Such things only become the *figures chiffonnées* of French *petites-maitresses*—they are not for true English beauty.”

She arose, took off Madame Devy's ‘last’

from her friend's head, and drawing out the whole back of a tortoise in form of a comb, let fall that profusion of fair hair which gave to Lady Frances's languid beauty its true character and appropriate embellishment.

"There, child — your *connoisseur de mari*, in his collection of Grammont beauties in the salon *là-bas*, has nothing like that: you are precisely *La belle Jennings*. Why don't you receive him at breakfast just so? A pretty woman is never so irresistible as in the freshness of the morning and of the morning toilet: you mistake it altogether."

"But, Princess," said Lady Frances, glancing at an opposite mirror in conscious beauty, and ever charmed by flattery at all hours and from all persons, "I never see my husband at breakfast; and, at this season, but rarely at dinner—that is, at home. We sometimes do dine out together."

"Yes, I know. I've seen you perched up in the same chariot, like two sulky birds in a cage after a pecking-match. You are both to blame; you most, as being the superior animal."

Lady Frances smiled, and shook her head.

"Yes, you are, by nature, if there was any nature about you ; but there is not."

Lady Frances laughed.

"How very odd you are !"

"It is true," said the Princess. "The state of what you call high society in England is so artificial, that there is not a trace of nature to be found among you. Your religion, your morality, your hours, your habits, even your follies—all are artificial and conventional. But you are reaching that solstice, beyond which no society can go."

"I don't understand you."

"Well, then, the reign of fine-ladyism, the despotism of coteries, are crumbling away. Almack's, like Westminster Abbey, once destined to illustrate only the great, will be thrown open to all who can pay for their admission. Do you understand that ?"

"There is something in it," said Lady Frances, gravely. "Almack's is not what it was. What *is* to be done ?"

"Now, that you are all nearly undone, — nothing. Stand aside, let the torrent pass. You cannot stop it, though you may be overwhelmed in the attempt."

"This is odd, from you !" said Lady Frances.

"One may act wrong," replied the Princess, "yet think right ; and may sin, as you English call it, without being absolutely a fool. Lady Montessor has told me all. Your husband wants an excuse to part from you, and has hit upon me. What advice has your friend, the Marchesa, given you ? She told me that she had written."

"Since you know all," said Lady Frances, "there is her letter ; she deserves that I should show her up."

"To be sure she does. *Voyons donc.*"

The Princess threw off a large bonnet, flung aside a black cashmir shawl, and read the letter, so carelessly confided to her. It was the peculiar character of the Princess of Schaffenhhausen's countenance and person, to make a picture, in whatever light or position she placed herself. Even the insipid, languid, unimaginative Lady Frances felt this as she gazed on her ; and she looked with a mixture of fear and admiration. Her head was enveloped in a black crape, so as wholly to conceal her hair, while it defined the form of her high, clear forehead, which was marked almost as with a straight line

by her black and mobile eyebrows. Her large grey eyes were shaded, not concealed, by their dark projecting lids and silken lashes, which fell upon a cheek, of that deep rich tone of colouring, which, though not bloom, expresses the circulation of health in every vein : a dress of black crape, terminated at the neck and wrists with snow-white Vandyke, giving relief to a sombre habiliment, otherwise ill suited to the gaiety of the season. A crimson breviary, clasped with gems, lay upon her knee, (for she came from the Bavarian Chapel, where Pasta and Malibran had been singing,) and a superb ivory cross hung from her neck by a rosary of antique form and materials : the *ensemble* gave her the air of a picture by Hals or Velasquez.

While reading Lady Montessor's epistle, the concentrated expression of her countenance yielded, more than once, to a smile of humour and finesse, which, in parting lips of the most delicate form and coral hue, displayed two rows of pearly teeth. Beautiful as was the smile, it had a very sinister expression ; and it might well have passed for that of a handsome imp.

She laid the letter on the table.

"Well," said Lady Frances, "what do you think?"

"That your friend is a fool—as the false ever are; and that her letter is a tissue of cant and nonsense. Shall I answer your husband's letter for you?"

The incorrigible Lady Frances burst into a fit of laughter.

"That would be too pleasant!"

"You must first let me see it."

Lady Frances put her husband's letter into the Princess's hands, who read it calmly and smilingly, as if her own vices had not formed its principal subject.

"Give me pen, ink, and paper," she said.

Lady Frances rung the golden bell on her table for the page, who was in the veranda tying flowers. The *secrétaire* was placed before the Princess, and the boy dismissed. After a silence of many minutes, Lady Frances, who had stretched herself in her easy chair, overcome by languor and exhaustion, fell fast asleep. The heat of the morning flushed her cheek, which her fair and flowing tresses shaded. Meantime, the paroquet, perched on the back of her chair, weary of the confinement, after

sundry efforts broke the thread which confined it, and flew away.

The Princess, after a moment's pause, threw down her pen, and seizing a pencil, with the aid of a little rouge borrowed from the adjoining toilet, produced a beautiful *croquis* of the beautiful subject. The resemblance, though flattering, was perfect. The bird was in the act of flying off; and a motto was written beneath, "*Qui me néglige, me perd.*"

The Princess having finished her sketch, touched the cheek of the fair sleeper with the feather of a pen: she started, rubbed her eyes—

"I was dreaming," she said: and she paused, smiled, and blushed.

"Of Claude Campbell," said the Princess, fixing her eyes on her.

"How very odd! Yes, I dreamed he was my paroquet, and that he had flown away."

"And so he will," said the Princess: "you may chain an eagle, but you will never attach a parrot."

"You may be a sorceress, but you are no prophetess," said Lady Frances, taking the hit as it was intended.

"Suppose I were both?" said the Princess.

"Where is the answer to Sir Frederick's letter?" asked Lady Frances, with an expression of humour.

"Here it is!" said the Princess, presenting the beautiful sketch, of which Lawrence, who thought much more of his drawings than of his paintings, might have been proud.

"Gracious!" said Lady Frances, delighted; "why, it is a picture!—it is . . . *me*! so very like! and Coco flying away too!—my very dream!"

"Yes, your dream: awake, then; rouse yourself! Your bird and your boy, let them both go: they belong not to you, not to your position. Wife and mother, give up folly before it gives up you; and let taste at least do what feeling may fail to suggest."

The Princess was standing with her hand spread upon the shoulder of the almost frightened Lady Frances, who looked up in her face with an expression of timidity and surprise. The sternness of Madame Schaffenhäusen's countenance changed like a rainbow, and a smile the most playful came over her features. She drew her chair close to Lady Frances's, and taking both hands in hers, she said with a half-laugh—

"I have frightened, but I only want to warn you. Hear me, and then—we have done, for ever ! That little cousin of yours is a little profligate—and a little fool, *par-dessus le marché*: but he is the real cause of your husband's displeasure ; I am only the ostensible pretext."

"No, no, he hates you," said Lady Frances, with *naïveté* ; "they have put horrible things into his head about you."

"Yes, I know : they have told him I am a sort of a Madame de C——, a political *intrigante*, one who carries a printing-press in her dressing-box."

"Oh ! worse than that !"

The Princess sunk back in an easy attitude, and continued : "An *affaire de sentiment* with Metternich, probably ?"

"*Encore pire*," said Lady Frances, smiling.

"My being *la femme à main gauche*, then, of the Prince?"

"Oh ! worse, worse, worse ! — Now, don't be angry, dearest Princess !"

"I ? — not in the least. — Something about a husband missing, perhaps ?"

Lady Frances threw down her eyes and coloured.

"But, *belle enfant*, if all this were true, do you think I should be received in the first society of England ! run after ! courted ! my house never empty ! and my porter's book always full ?"

"People are not so very particular about foreign princes and princesses," lisped Lady Frances.

"No," said the Princess, significantly ; "nor with domestic ones neither. A crime or a vice more or less, is easily forgiven or forgotten here, provided rank or party give *le mot d'ordre* ! But, never mind me and my vices. Sir Frederick is not so prudish as to be shocked at the failings of a German princess ; but he hates me personally, because some of my dear, trustworthy friends have repeated an epigram or two, which have touched his *amour-propre* where it is most susceptible. He hates me, too, for the influence he supposes I have over you, and by which they say I mean to get at him : that is, he has been told so by your dear friend the Marchioness : the world sets me down as a sort of political Mrs. Medlicot, or something worse."

"Oh ! *par exemple*, he is right as to your extraordinary influence over me : Claude says it is a spell."

"Yes; the spell of convenience. You like my house, and my parties; and the freedom of foreign habits suits your purposes."

"No, no," said Lady Frances, smiling and caressing her; "I like yourself and your society for its own sake."

"You never missed it last night?" said the Princess.

Lady Frances opened her eyes. "Missed you?"

"All charming as I am, nobody missed me!"

"What do you mean?"

"Only that I was otherwise employed than presiding over orgies, of which I am, truth to tell, completely *ennuyée*! But you had my house. And now to the point. Send this portrait to your husband; it is the best answer to his letter. There is no reasoning with man. He is the spoiled child of institutions and society. Woman never speaks to his sense, but only to his senses; one image, such as this, is worth all Lushington ever uttered in Doctors' Commons, of neglected duties, and the carelessness of husbands.

"The motto, you see, is a common-place!"

No matter. The application will supply the want of originality. The image is poetry, and will go home to his imagination, when all the prose in the world would fail to interest or move his feelings in your behalf. But mind, you must send an apology to aunt Di. Those picnics are dangerous things : and when Sir Frederick arrives from Lady John Montessor's, you must receive him just as you are, *entendez-vous* ? When you perfectly understand each other," she added archly, " why then you shall propose going a tour this summer ; and "

" That," interrupted Lady Frances, eagerly, " is precisely what I was thinking about. We are planning a tour, and a visit to your castle on the Rhine. I must go somewhere ; I am so very shattered. The Montessor's talk of Baden, when the House is up ; and we can take you on our way, you know."

" And as Sir Frederick threatens separation if you do not give me up "

" Gracious ! I had forgot that : but that is only one of his fits of temper ; and when he sees this very pretty picture, he will admire it so very much, it will set all to rights. I have it

at heart to bring you together : the ice once broken, I know he would fall in love with you."

The Princess looked on her earnestly. An air of thoughtful abstraction gradually replaced the glance of ridicule, which gave to her mobile countenance its most habitual expression.

Some minutes elapsed before Lady Frances, who was engaged in admiring her own likeness, inquired—

"What are you thinking about, *ma belle*?"

"I am thinking," said the Princess, "that original conformation is superior to all impression ; and that, what is pedantically called the power of reason, is only the adaptability of certain truths to certain dispositions."

"I do not understand you," said Lady Frances, caressing the bird, which had flown back to its perch on her chair.

"If you could, the observation would not have been made :—*vous n'êtes pas impressionnable, chère amie.*"

"There is one who does not think so," muttered Lady Frances, half aside.

There was a pause. The Princess took up the Red-book, and fluttered over the pages, till

she came to the marriage of the Duke of Caithness with "Lady Frances Alicia Caroline, &c. daughter of Francis Marquis of Montessor, by whom he had, first, Frances, &c. &c."

"I thought so," said the Princess; "you have that foolish Montessor blood in your veins! Your mother was a Montessor. From such a horoscope it would be easy to cast your fortune."

"Oh! but don't!" said Lady Frances, starting. "I like to live *au jour la journée*: one never can answer for oneself."

"And, least of all," said the Princess, "when one is *entre deux âges*!—that twilight of the passions, when one gropes oneself into a scrape, which in youth one would have wanted the courage, and in age the desire, to encounter."

"I see, by this book, you are just thirty-five; two years older than myself: a glorious age for a woman, (were she one who knows how to make use of it;) the prime of her beauty, of her genius, and her knowledge. But, if she resemble that bird that pecks from your hand; if her head be small, her eyes wide apart, her nose aquiline, and her features rigid; if she be

easy to flatter, and difficult to fix ; thirty-five is a perilous age : look to that ! I give you one year only to be saved or lost. Your beauty may do much now with your husband, but not *all* : 'the bending statue which delights the world,' is but the representation of what you English call a Becky ; and though you were Venus de Medicis stepped from off her pedestal, you will neither recover nor retain a passionate and intellectual man, such as your husband, if there is only that."

Lady Frances tossed her head, and lowered, and then smiled, not quite sure whether she should be flattered or offended by this speech. The Becky, weighed in the scales with the Venus de Medicis, almost kicked the beam.

The Princess rose, and Lady Frances made no attempt to detain her ; she only said, rather coldly—

" Well, I will try the effect of your portrait. I am sure I don't want to quarrel with Sir Frederick just now — it would be particularly inconvenient. But, you have not told me what defence I am to make for you to Sir Frederick. He is so very prejudiced !"

"Prejudice is rarely to be argued with," said the Princess, after a long silence. "The wounds of self-love, like those of some reptiles, have their best remedy in the source from which they derive their venom."

"But we really must go and see you this summer in your castle on the Rhine," said Lady Frances, returning to the point.

"I fear my chateau on the Rhine will turn out a *château en Espagne*. The widow of my late husband's eldest brother, who is a German, held it in abhorrence, and suffered it to go out of order. But I have a pretty *rendez-vous de chasse* in the forest of Soignes, near Brussels."

"That sounds charming," said Lady Frances, smilingly: "but I don't think any of our men would like to go to Brussels at present."

"I can conceive that," said the Princess, drily.

"And you, Princess,—I wonder, with your principles, you ever mean to return to that revolutionary country."

"I am not such a partisan," said the Princess, "as to set principles at odds with property."

"But you will not be so *bête* as to trust your-

self there," interrupted Lady Frances, impatiently, "before the Nassans return?"

"*Pas si bête*," said the Princess. "I should not like to wait *quite* so long, for the enjoyment of my pretty Pavillon de Grönendael, where I have all sorts of workmen now employed. These are not times to dally with enjoyment: '*aujourd'hui Dauphine, demain rien.*' Whatever may be my opinion of the Belgian government, I have but one of the country—that it is beautiful and prosperous. Besides, the Schaffenhäusen estate, in the arrondissement of Soignes, is worth triple the old ruins and uncertain vineyards of the Rhyngau; and now, wealth is my object; for wealth is everything: it is what knowledge was in one age, and numbers in another. But ——" She paused abruptly, and laughed.

"You think I don't understand you," said Lady Frances; "but I really do. I agree that wealth is everything. See what the V.'s have done this season, against the superior wealth of H—— House! There was a hard struggle for it, though, I assure you; but now they are reduced to eighteen thousand a-year, poor

dears ! Supposing, however, we vanquished Sir Frederick's prejudices against you, I don't see how any friends of the poor dear Nassaus could go to Belgium."

"Is Sir Frederick Mottram the friend of the King of Holland?" interrupted the Princess.

"Why, you know the Prince of Orange is a very old friend of mine; and when we were in Brussels in Twenty-nine, they were so very civil! I had the Prince's horses, and his box at the *spectacle* and at the race-course; and we dined at Lacken repeatedly."

"What brought you to Brussels?" asked the Princess, sitting down again, with a new interest in the conversation.

"We were returning from a short trip to Italy, and so we came home by Brussels, where I knew such quantities of nice people! the D'Arembourgs, the De Lignes, the D'Ursels, and the De Tresignies; the Merodes, and Vilain Quatorze, and the D'Hoogvoorsts — and, above all, the dear Prince of Orange! It was the most delightful month of my life! It would break my heart to go there now; and Mottram hates the Belgian revolution as much as I do."

“Why?” asked the Princess.

“Why, you know our party say that his best speech, this sessions, was his quizzing the protocols, and his hit at Lord Palmerston and the ministers, and all that sort of thing. You know I hate politics, though I do belong to Georgina Montessor’s set. But what a state of things, as she says, without a religion or a king! for Leopold the First will be Leopold the Last. It can never go on, as ‘the Age’ says.”

“Humph!” said the Princess; “that seems to be the general opinion—or wish, at least here:—among your set particularly.”

“Oh! universally. It is such a bad example! it is quite ridiculous! Lord Montessor says, they have not one advocate in the House; and Sir Frederick, I know, thinks Belgium must go to France: I’m sure I don’t know how! But I hope the Prince of Orange will get back to Brussels, where he has such a delight of a palace!”

“For one who knows nothing of politics, the Belgian revolution seems to have interested you, however?” observed the Princess.

“Oh! it did so, very much,—at the time: you

have no idea how much it has bored me, and overturned all my plans. Lord Montessor was to have gone there as ambassador. I forget why he wished it ; something about a *corps de ballet* he was to get up, and the races with dear Prince Frederick. I was to have gone on a visit to the Montessors, without Sir Frederick, who was then so very deep in politics."

"You were *épris* then with the Prince of Orange, and calculated on passing a pleasant winter at Brussels, as *dame du palais*, when that vulgar revolution interrupted all?"

"Just that—as far as going to Brussels is concerned," said Lady Frances, laughing ; but I assure you, *en tout bien, et tout honneur*."

"Oh ! of course : and now, adieu ! a long adieu !" said the Princess, rising and putting on her large bonnet. "You may, in perfect surety of conscience, tell your husband that you give me up ; for I give you up, from henceforth. I will not dine with you to-day."

"No ! Why not ?"

"Because I will no longer be a cause of uneasiness to that worthy man your husband."

"But he need know nothing about it."

"There must be no equivocation," said the Princess decidedly.

Lady Frances shook her head.

"I can never receive you under other circumstances," continued the Princess, coldly, "than that of your accompanying your husband, or coming with his consent."

"Then you will never receive me at all," said Lady Francis, peevishly, the tears gathering in her eyes: "so there is an end of our charming plans."

"We shall see," said the Princess, cheerfully; and then, taking up her sketch, and looking earnestly on it, she said, "Leave this on your husband's study-table, at all events."

"And when he asks me who drew it?"

"Tell the truth."

"Then he must know all?" said Lady Frances.

"And so he ought—and so he will! The world has done with mysteries, public and private: subterfuge is weakness, and concealment but the first step to discovery. Write down then among the roses, the violets, and other

flowery *fadaises* of your pretty album, and bear it constantly in your mind, that

‘Tôt ou tard, tout est su !’

Farewell !”

The Princess glided out of the room ; and Lady Frances, mistaking exhaustion and annoyance for sensibility, and self-commiseration for the regrets of friendship, burst into tears ; and then rung for æther, and her maid.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RACING-TABLE.

THE scene in the Round-room of the Opera, of which Sir Frederick and Lady Frances Mottram had been the protagonists, had furnished a rich feast of scandalous commentary to the frivolous, the curious, and the malignant. Lady Anastatia M'Query, a ways-and-means lady of quality, and one of the four unmarried, unportioned daughters of a poor Scotch peer, had found the tale a sort of passport to many houses, where she had previously worn out her welcome, with her stock of toad-eating flattery, or stretched her intrusions beyond the patient forbearance of connexion or of hospitality. The good Mrs. Medlicot, too, had turned the matrimonial *fracas* to her own account, by making it the text for many a homily upon the darkness of a benighted and God-abandoned age. More

than one noble substitute for the penny-a-line men of the party journals had served up the adventure in various forms; which were followed up by paragraphs, on 'the illness of Sir Frederick Mottram;' his 'absence from his seat in the House of Commons;' 'unexpected embarrassments;' 'separation on the tapis;' 'affair of jealousy;' 'Chiltern Hundreds,' &c. &c. : and a month passed away, before the public, and its 'best possible instructors,' had worn the subject to rags, and abandoned it for newer game.

Among the various annoyances thus pressed upon the sensitive feelings and nervous irritability of Sir Frederick Mottram, he found some consolation in the discovery to which they led, that he had yet a friend deeply interested in his happiness, and watchful over his career; a friend of his early years, from whom time and chance had latterly estranged him. A letter from this friend, Horace Harvey, after a silence of some years, fell upon his blighted and hopeless spirit, like a refreshing dew on the scathed flowers of an arid plain. It ran as follows:—

"TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM,
BART., CARLTON-TERRACE, LONDON.

" Glen Druid, Northamptonshire.

"MY DEAR MOTTRAM,— These are strange times, when the public is placed in a man's confidence before his oldest friends, and when newspapers openly discuss what intimacy shrinks from touching. The conservative journals, I know not why, have lately been pecking at you with unusual virulence ; the Whigs, of course, have not spared you ; and there is a pertinacity in their references to certain points connected with your interior life, which (maugre the little regard due to such authorities) makes me anxious and uneasy.

"The 'Post' of this morning states that you are about to accept the Chiltern Hundreds ; and hints that you are injured in your fortunes, and are going to reside abroad ;—the 'Standard,' after some coarse accusations of political tergiversation, has an obscure paragraph concerning domestic disquietudes ;—the 'Globe' (more alarming) talks of ill health ; and there is an anecdote in the 'Age,' full of dashes and asterisks, with an allusion to Lady Frances, to a certain '*petit*

cousin,' and a German Princess ; ending with a plain assertion, that you are about to separate from your wife. Is it possible that there can be truth in any one of these statements ? or is it but the usual effort to supply the rage for party calumny and personal anecdote ?

"Aware, as I am, that causes will bring forth their appropriate effects ; and fearing, as I have long done, that the position in which circumstances and family ambition had thrown you, would prove anything but favourable to health, fortune, or domestic peace ; still I am shocked — grieved. It can be no ordinary event that would drive Frederick Mottram from a public career, in which he has been so successful ; and the Chiltern Hundreds story (which is in some measure confirmed to me from another source) makes me fear for the accomplishment of my own prediction. I have long inferred, particularly since the change in Ministry and the Reform, that your opinions have not always been in unison with your position as a partisan : but, whatever disgusts or disagreements may have arisen, I cannot think they would drive you, by quitting Parliament, to

abandon a career for which you have made so many sacrifices.

“That your health should be giving way under the late hours of the House of Commons, and the dissipations of a London life, would not surprise me. When last we met, I noticed the inroads which too close an attendance on office had made on a constitution not formed to stand the wear and tear of vulgar contention. Even this, however, would be preferable to disappointment in a quarter, the more difficult to endure, because it is one in which, as you have so often lamented, you do not wholly feel yourself exempt from self-reproach. On that point I could never agree with you: sharing all your convictions on ‘incompatibility,’ ‘misplaced ambition,’ &c. &c., I still thought that deference to a parent’s wishes put you completely *rectus in curiâ*, respecting your marriage; and I am satisfied that, as far as respects yourself, no woman could have just cause to regret placing her happiness in your keeping.

“I cannot, therefore, believe the separation story, in whole or in part; and if there be any

truth in your retirement from Parliament, if either your health or temper have been ruffled by recent events, let me prescribe for you a visit to Mottram Hall, where I can give you a meeting. I should propose going to London myself, but my mother is just now in one of her paroxysms of suffering, and must not be left.

“Write to me, then, I beseech you. I think I have claims on your confidence, and that I am not without sufficient feeling and experience to be serviceable in any worldly emergency. Minds like yours are too apt to be put out of tune by the jarring of some petty chord, and to be let down in the heated and unnatural atmosphere of the world of fashion. If this be your case, I am morally, intellectually, and personally your fittest physician; and a good dose of my Pantagruelian pococuranteism will do more to set you right, than all the stoicism in Epictetus.

“Time and the world, my dear Mottram, have rushed strangely between us, since, in our relation of tutor and pupil, (a relationship scarcely warranted by the slight difference of years,) we laid the foundation of a friendship which we

then thought no circumstance could interrupt. The bankruptcy of my father, the extraordinary success of yours, have alike contributed to turn us both from the path of our hopes and expectations. Of you Fortune has made a statesman, and has wedded you into one of the proudest and most powerful families in our peerage : of me she has disposed in single blessedness, and in retirement from all serious affairs ; a philosophical hermit, poor, but contented—a cynic, but not a Heraclitus.

“ Had I not, coxcomb as I was, aspired to your sister, and, still worse, preached liberalism to yourself, I might have risen to wealth and consideration ; and had you married that impersonation of Byron’s ‘ beautiful spirit,’—that most gifted and unfortunate of an unfortunate class,—how different might have been our lot ! You, at least, might have been more useful to your species, more elevated in your ambition, and, perhaps, more happy, than accident, or rather uncontrollable necessity, has left you. United to the woman of your choice, her restless energies would have roused your less active temperament ; her intense devotedness would have

met your passionate feelings ; and her love and genius for the arts would have nourished that highest and purest source of human enjoyment, for which you were born. But I will not farther impose on your time and patience. I hear your apartments at Mottram Hall are getting ready for your reception : we shall soon meet there. In the mean while, satisfy my uneasiness at these *voces ambiguas*.

“ By the way, who is this German Princess ? Can she be a Princess of Schaffenhhausen, who lately wrote to me to express her desire of possessing your mother’s picture, in the character of Rosalind, by Romney ; for which she offered any price I might choose to put on it ? She says she wants it to complete a collection of English painters ; but her earnestness about a master whose works are not rare, is a good specimen of the peremptoriness of an aristocratic volition. She shan’t have it at any price !

“ Affectionately yours,

“ HORACE HARVEY.”

To this letter Sir Frederick Mottram promptly replied. His answer ran thus :—

“ TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ. GLEN DRUID,
NORTH HANTS.

“ Carlton-terrace.

“ MY DEAR HORACE,—I thank you for your letter. I can understand that you made an effort on yourself to write it; for I am aware that I have sailed in the north of your philosophical and political opinions, for the last few years; and that, in spite of your professions, (you were not wont to make them,) I am more indebted to your compassion, or, perhaps, to the triumph of your pride of prophecy, than to any great sympathy you can have in my destinies.

“ Well, I have no split with my party; though some of its out-and-out men totally disagree with me on one or two questions; and affect to attribute this difference to the leaven of my plebeian origin and early connexions. Neither have any articles of separation been drawn up between me and Lady Frances: we are pretty much where we have been for many years; and ‘the boy’ alluded to is my wife’s godson and cousin.

“ You must remember, a few years back, the pretty imp that enacted Tom Thumb, when my wife got up her private theatricals at Mottram Hall. You may have seen her then kiss his peachy cheek, pat his head, and plat his fair and flaxen locks with flowers. His cheek is still as peachy, his locks as flaxen, and his head as empty, as ever. Jealous of such a thing as that!—Oh! no!

“ My wife is what the world calls virtuous: her vanity stands in the place of passion; and her social habits, of all ties, feelings, and predilections. She lives with a set, and knows and sees nothing beyond it. Her intimates are false, foolish, and heartless; but still persons of high consideration. I have entire confidence in her *virtue*, though none in her conduct. Her virtue—were it otherwise!—Tut! the very idea is heart-sickening, maddening! As if any one with the spirit, nay, with the passions of a man, would await for the most degrading conviction; would patiently pause for a ‘damning witness,’ and then show himself up as dupe and victim, in terms which the world’s laugh has marked down for eternal ridicule!

“Every pulse in my body throbs to bursting at the bare idea. I have no melancholy and gentlemanly philosophy about me to bear me up under such circumstances. Such patient forbearance, with its good taste and good keeping, belongs only to the *gentlemen* by descent and alliance, whose fathers have endured the same infliction before them, and bequeathed to their sons their *honours* and their contempt for public opinion. I am not of these; I am a plebeian, the son of a man who was of the unwashed people—of a man, every inch a man, but no gentleman. The muscles that earned his daily bread would have crushed a gentleman to the earth. His pains-taking industry and sagacious calculations raised him up the wealth which bought from these high-minded and proud gentlemen a participation of their boasted honours.

“It was gold (gold, honourable in the hands of the industry that acquired it, but base and infamous in those of the creatures who bartered for it their incommunicable birthrights,)—it was gold that placed us in the ranks of the aristocracy; *with* them, not *of* them. For years I

have been reproached with these things, and twitted with frequent allusions to my father's birth, my mother's profession. And what was that? an actress,—she was a woman of no common talents; gifted, at least, with the talent of amusing the blockheads who could not amuse themselves. Well, I have shaken off my susceptibility to all this; and I have learned, from the weakness, the inanity, the folly, the ignorance, and the corruption of the high allies I have made, to honour and respect the humble but useful race from which I have sprung.

“As for the Princess, the heroine of the ‘Morning Post,’ the fourth Grace and the tenth Muse of the ‘Court Journal,’ that is another thing altogether! I am of La Bruyère's opinion, that ‘*Il vaut mieux aller à l'opéra avec tel homme, qu'au sermon avec telle femme* ;’ a maxim which strictly applies to this foreigner, who has attained to a considerable and a mischievous influence over my wife, and has, I think, through Lady Frances's means, wormed herself into the exclusive society of London, where, with her lost character, not even her letters from the *chefs* of

foreign cabinets would have placed her. Her applying to you for my mother's picture is but one of her traits of intrigue, originating in a desire to mortify me, because I have refused to be introduced to her, or to give her admission into my house. I hate these *femmes affairées*; these Mesdames de Prie and De Grammont; these petticoated ministers, the worst signs of the worst epochs.

“ My wife and I had a *démêlé*, some time back, after the opera, apropos to this Princess. I sent Lady Frances a letter, which, perhaps, I ought not to have written; and, instead of defending herself, or giving up this person, she sent me her own picture; a splendid drawing; just what she was when I married her. It had also a little motto, full of fancy and of delicate reproach, which brought me all but to her feet; when, on entering her room, I observed on the back of her chair a bird, a paroquet, which I had never seen before. This led to an explanation, and it came out that the portrait had been done only the previous day; and by whom, think you? Why, by the Princess!

My wife was such a d—— Becky as to show her my letter; of which, abuse of her was the foundation. Hers, then, was the drawing, hers the device, the idea!

“But enough of her; and now for my pecuniary affairs.

“I have meddled so much with those of the country, that I have neglected my own most foolishly. I am going down to-morrow with Harris to Mottram Hall, to muddle over accounts of twelve years’ standing, and put things in a better train. As for my health, Horace, I am dying. I don’t in the least mind what the physicians say, nor even what you think: I have that within, which passes their and your skill. The sources of life, I feel, are dried up within me: nothing touches, nothing interests me. The *cui bono* of all follows me like a shadow. Music and painting, once the charm of my existence, have lost their spell. I am inert, listless, dissatisfied; with a perpetual weight on my spirits, and a prostration of will, that neither permits me to pursue any one object, nor to rest contented and tranquil in my nullity. I am feverish and restless by night, and my appetite

is as wholly gone as my relish for things more intellectual. My temper, too, is become irritable ; and I am annoyed by trifles, till I am vexed and mortified at my own susceptibility. This cannot long go on.

“ Your allusion to one now no more was, I am sure, well meant ; so is the operation which strikes the knife into a deep-seated gangrene : but it requires considerable firmness of nerve to make the incision !

“ It was, however, more ill (or well) timed than you had reason to suppose. The image of that creature has recently recurred to my imagination, as I saw her first at my father's, on my arrival from Oxford for my first vacation. She was singing at her easel, and copying my mother's picture by Romney. She was dressed in that fantastic Polish dress, which my mother's always theatrical taste compelled her to assume. What a perfect incarnation of all that is beautiful in form, with all that is bright in moral combination ! Then, her quick apprehension of external forms, and her mystic power of reproducing them ! her faculty of high resolve, under the government of high

motives ! What a sublime, what a privileged specimen of humanity ! Well, it is scarcely five days since I saw this being, this once beautiful shrine of talents and acquirements so superior ; and where do you think ? On the bed of penurious, public charity ; a corpse in a work-house ; indebted to benevolent but mistaken piety for the last acts of compassionate sympathy !

“ My mother and myself, as you well know, thought that this last scene of a heart-breaking tragedy had been completed fourteen years ago. We had been told so, and believed it. We had not time then to inquire very deeply, for it was my wedding-week. ‘ Some natural tears we shed, but dried them soon ; ’ and I went with my noble and beautiful bride to Italy. My mother died in my absence, and ——— But why this to you ? The bitter recollections this event left behind it, were added to the higher causes which threw me into public life. But she whom we had driven to this destiny did not *then* die ; she lived to suffer and to struggle on, without making one application to her near and wealthy kindred, and to die at last, and almost

in my presence, in the workhouse of ——! I cannot go on."

* * * * *

Sir Frederick Mottram flung down his pen, and throwing himself back in his chair, pressed his clenched hands on his aching brow, and yielded his whole being up to that torrent of uneasy sensation, to which disease of mind and of body alike contributed their evil influence. It was a splendid summer's evening, and the only silent hour which London knows at that season of pleasure and of bustle—the London dinner-hour. Lady Frances had not returned from a *déjeûné dînatoire*, announced three weeks before, and given by Lord Alfred in honour of the Princess of Schaffhausen, whose arrival in London from a tour had that morning glittered in all the papers.

Sir Frederick had himself left the House of Commons early, for the purpose of transacting some business preparatory to his leaving town the next day; but he had employed the interval in answering his friend's letter, a task to which he brought an aggravated feeling of remorse conjured up by its allusions. He was still

busied in the indulgence of bitter recollections, when the study-door slowly opened, and Larry Fegan again stood, as he had done some weeks before, in the opening. It was, however, no longer the helper of the helper—the rough, ragged, and forlorn creature, whose appearance was at once so farcical and so astounding: it was the head groom of Sir Frederick's establishment, a handsome, showy, and well-dressed *palefrenier*, as ever shared the admiration of the Sunday promenaders of the Park with the distinguished master he followed.

“ Well, sir !” said Sir Frederick, starting as from an uneasy dream.

“ I big your pardon, Sir Frederick, intirely, and didn't know your honor was in it, sir. I only came to take the liberty of laving a frank for my mother, to be freed at your honor's leisure. ‘ Mistress Betty Burke,’ sir, ‘ alias Fegan, Shanballymac, county Kerry—to be lift till called for—care of Mr. Owen Geraghty, Post Office.’ ”

“ I cannot remember all this,” said Sir Frederick, impatiently ; “ write the address, and leave your letter.”

"I shall, sir, of coorse," replied Fegan, retiring to the door, and yet pausing at the threshold with a look which indicated that his Irish ingenuity had made the avowed pretext of his intrusion but the *avant-courier* to something that remained behind. He paused, picked up a book that had fallen from the shelves, and asked if he should order lights. A sharp "No" again drove him to the door, which he half closed; but, advancing once more to the table, Sir Frederick drew up, and asked—

"What is the matter?"

"Nothing in life, plaze your honor," was the reply, "only a taste of a note, Sir Frederick, I left for you here on your teeble. I was mounted on the blood mare, after coming in with your honor from the Park to-day, and waiting for orders in regard of going to the House, sir, before I put up the mare, when she said to me, says she, 'The porter has refused to take my note to Sir Frederick,' says she."

"Who? — what she?" was asked impatiently.

"Th' ould Sister of Charity, Sir Frederick; you know yourself, sir, of coorse."

Larry Fegan paused ; but there was a humorous significance in his face which indicated that more was meant than spoken.

“ So, plaze your honor,” he continued, “ I tuck the liberty of bringing the note myself, for charity’s sweet sake, and left it here, sir, under this bit of green marvel, sir, with the little dumb blackamoor on it.”

As he spoke, he raised a beautiful *presse-papier* with a bronze figure of Silence. Sir Frederick snatched up the note, and Fegan retreated to the door, fixing his eyes on his master with a gaze of intense curiosity. Sir Frederick read :

“ At the desire of Sir Frederick Mottram, the person who met him at the workhouse of —— has called twice in Carlton-terrace, but was not admitted. Should Sir Frederick have any inquiries to make of her, she will be happy to reply to the uttermost of her ability ; but she leaves London at an early hour to-morrow, on professional avocations. She will receive any order left before midnight with the porter of the chapel of the —— Embassy, directed to Madame Mortier.”

During the rapid perusal of this note, Lawrence Fegan was slowly drawing the door after him.

“Stay !” said Sir Frederick.

Fegan shut the door with alacrity, and drew up.

“Get your hat, and return.”

Fegan was back before his master had concluded the following lines :—

“MADAM, — I trust you will allow me to apologize *de vive voix*, for the impertinence or mistake of my porter. I shall remain at home for the rest of this evening, and shall be flattered by the honour of a visit. The person who will deliver this (an Irish Catholic) will be in attendance to admit you.

“I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

“F. MOTTRAM.”

Fegan accepted his commission with an air of confidential importance, which showed that intrigue was an ingredient of his temperament ; and Sir Frederick returned once more to the letter he had left unfinished, when interrupted

by his groom : he added the following post-script :—

“ A little incident has occurred, which obliges me to conclude thus abruptly. I have much to say to you, dear Horace ; but it must be under the old elms of Mottram Hall. Till then, and ever, *vale et me ama* ! “ F. M.”

Fegan, for whose return Sir Frederick had waited with impatience, at length arrived, bringing only a receipt for his own billet. He was desired to remain in waiting in the hall ; where, with Mr. Jennings the new porter’s permission, he seated himself at the desk. Taking from his pocket the awkwardly-folded sheet prepared for his master’s frank, he began to write that letter, which at first had only been thought of as an excuse for following up his effort to procure the Sister of Charity the means of applying to Sir Frederick. Whether her *billet* was one of love or of religion, Fegan knew not ; but he was equally ready for either mission. The results of his epistolary *verve* are subjoined.

“ TO MRS. ELIZABETH FEGAN, ALIAS BURKE,
SHANBALLYMAC, COUNTY KERRY.

“**ONERED MOTHER**,—I writ ye a long letter by Jimmy Howlan, who was going to the leeks from Brissels, with his furrin master—and wouldn’t care if myself was in it ; th’ iday of ould Ireland just hanging about my neck like a milestone ; though the greatest of luck has come upon me since thin, mother dear ; and I no more thinking of it, surely, than the child unborn. And well, ma’am, what would yez be after thinking if it’s own body groom I am to the Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick Mottrum, barynite, and minister of steet, and privy-counsellor to the King—O ! divil a less, ma’am : and I thought it the greatest of honors to be his own little boy behind the cab, and breaking my arrum—God bless the mark ! Och ! then, mother dear, I wisht you were after seeing me, this blessed day, ’bove all the days o’ the year, mounted on an elegant blood mare the Knight of Kerry might be proud to ride, and I in my bran new livery shuit, that is no livery at all, I ’m proud to say ; but just sich a coat as the first gentleman in the land

needn't be ashamed to wear : to say nothing of a new carline,* and neither band nor bow, so that it's what I might pass for a raal gintleman bred and born all over th' universal world ; which, mother dear, you know I am, if every one had his jew. And the masther, the Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick, riding afore me, down to the House, and up the Park, to th' intire amazement of the out-of-dur servants, including Mr. Saunders, the head coachman, a raal buckeen, keeping company with the best in the land at the races and other resorts.

“ Mother dear, I'll send you a sovrin in gould, and an iligant shawl, by the first opportunity ; and was thinking that when I'd be after taking my second quarter—and has twenty guineas a-year, ma'am, with clouths, boots, and buckskins—(for the first will go to pay my trifle of dits ;) and sure, it's in regard of being so long out of pleece, and other raisons afore-min-tioned in my last. Och hone ! but I was in a poor wey thin ; but don't be graving now, for it's all over, like the fair of Athy : and was advised by th' under coachman, a dacent

* Hat :—quære, why so called in Ireland ?

Dublin boy, to presint a petition to Sir Frederick, and tell him how I had fell into throuble, and grew up big, bare, and necked; but had a spurrit above it, of coorse, as well becomed me: and manetime was doing a turn about the place, in th' offices and the steeble-yard; and had my bit and my sup, and my rag; and Larry here, and Larry there, and doing a turn for the housemaids one day, in regard of the dustings and the pope's-heads; and helping the helper on another; and hiding in the hay-loft, from Mr. Saunders, who hates the *Hirish*, bad luck to him! worse nor pison: and th' hall porter, who isn't the boy to throw a drop over his shoulder, nor stand by looking at other people dhrinking; and I put into his aisy-cheer, night afther night; and not a christhian in the house, bad or good, only myself, and the maids, and the sick futman in the garret, and nobody to look after him nor wet his lips but myself.

"Well, the divil sich ballyboraging and rollicking ever ye seed as is going on here from morning till night; and my Leedy and Sir Frederick knowing no more about it nor the child unborn: and you 'd be afther taking th' house-

steward for a bishop, and the grooms of the cheembers for the protestant ministers of Shanballymac ; they looking as stately, ma'am, and as high, as the rock of Cashel, in black clouths, and white cambrick pocket-handkerchiefs. And this is the way, mother dear, I got into place, opening the hall-door for the maister in the middle of the night, and the blessed sun shining, and other things, which it doesn't behove me to be afther talking about ; so mum's the word.

"So now I'm his honor's own groom, and grown as fat as a fool, ma'am ; having lots to ate, nothing to do, and plenty to help me. So, the place shooting me intirely, I have got my hair cut in the new London fashion, with an helper under me, and goes to Ashley's, and begs my duty to Father Murphy, for the great peins he tuck with my edication—and no thanks to Miss Grimly's Protestant Oxillery Bible Sunday-school : and till him, if ye plaze, that I means to take up, and look to my duty, and takes the liberty of sending him a snuff-box, which Jeemes Howlan tells me was blessed by the Pope of Room, with the other bastes, on St. Anthony's day ; and gave him a bran new

Culgee handkerchief for it ; with which, including the sovrin and the shawl, I remain, onered mother,

“ Your own dear and dutiful son,
till further notice by post or otherwise,
your affectionate

“ LAWRENCE FEGAN.”

While Fegan was thus amusing himself by the simple but not unstudied expression of his filial feelings, the grooms of the chamber were hurrying to their posts, lamps and lustres were lighting, and notes of various preparation were sounding in the hitherto silent mansion. A select party was expected to return with Lady Frances, to tea and a *grillé*, from a fête at Norwood.

Meantime, Sir Frederick was waiting in anxious impatience for the arrival of *his* invited guest : he considered his acceptance of her proposed visit as a species of tribute to the memory of one, whom conscience or vanity made him believe he had hurried to an untimely grave ; and he sought in vain to quell his perturbation and appease his restlessness by the details of business.

The clock had struck eleven, when Lady Frances's return was announced by the roll of carriages, and by much noise and laughing, as she passed with her party up stairs. Other carriages and other guests succeeded. Sir Frederick rang his bell; but before the footman could appear, the officious Fegan was at the door.

"She isn't come, plaze your honor, or I lets your honor know, of coorse," he said, significantly.

"Send William to me," was the answer, "and tell the second coachman to have horses at the door at five in the morning. You may then go to bed: I have no farther occasion for you."

Fegan retired, with his customary "Of coorse, sir;" which, however, was not in perfect keeping with the expression of mortified disappointment that sat upon his countenance.

When William appeared, his answer to his master's inquiries was, that "her ladyship had a very small party at tea."

Midnight arrived, and Sir Frederick dismissed all expectation of his devout visitant. He was almost relieved by the disappointment. He had

a few words to say to Lady Frances before leaving town, relative to his son; and he resolved, after a slight struggle with his feelings, to join her party for a few minutes. He was just passing into the hall, with this intention, as a chair entered it. A lady in black, who had more the air of a Venetian mask than of the guest of an English drawing-room, stepped out. The thought that this might be his expected visitant crossed him; and he would have returned to his study, but a line of servants cut off his retreat. The footmen in the inner hall gave her name to the groom of the chambers on the landing-place; and the title of the Princess of Schaffenhhausen resounded from chamber to chamber, as she passed through the suite of rooms to Lady Frances's boudoir.

Sir Frederick stood for a moment in angry astonishment. Lady Frances had solemnly promised not to see the Princess again, during her stay in England; had assured him that she had taken her final leave of Carlton-terrace; and yet she was now again under his roof; admitted into his wife's most intimate society; and, to judge by her appearance, entering his doors, if

not incognito, at least with the view of escaping identification, should chance throw him, where choice never could, into his wife's society.

His feelings were outraged, his pride wounded, his humour goaded to its uttermost bitterness; and he resolved on holding no further terms with one whose duplicity, contempt for his wishes, and indifference to his injunctions and opinion, had passed the bounds of all sufferance. Yet she was in the midst of her kindred, and surrounded by admirers; while he, an alien in his own adopted circle, in his own house, amidst a host of acquaintance, had not one friend. A sense of this desolation aggravated every other emotion, and he advanced through the beautiful and half-lighted rooms with a haggard look and disturbed air, that aroused the *tête-à-tête* languor of the occupants of Lady Frances's boudoir.

These were Lord Allington and Mrs. St. Leger. The former stared, but coolly kept his seat: the latter sprang forward to an inner room, plainly to anticipate his arrival. There was an attempt to shut the door; but he burst in. His appearance was momentary, but of

strange effect. Between his entrance at one door, and his departure through another, scarcely a minute elapsed ; though it had sufficed to embarrass and disconcert the idle and inconsiderate group which occupied the apartment.

The company were gathered round a species of gambling-table, fitted up in a chamber dedicated exclusively to the arts. The gamesters were already worn out by the long pursuit of their morning's amusements ; and even the excitements of a novel species of dissipation failed to engage them. But Sir Frederick's transit put an abrupt termination to the amusements : carriages were ordered, the guests departed, the lights were extinguished, and silence again reigned in the gorgeous but dreary mansion.

The scene which had occurred had been so rapidly enacted, that none but the principal actress was capable of calculating its consequences or appreciating its details. Foolish, frivolous, and inconsequent as Lady Frances might be, she trembled for the results as they affected her own plans and pleasures ; though less alive to their influence on her character and her posi-

tion with her husband : and in her habit of relying upon others, or the consciousness of her own want of resource, she threw off one of those wordy epistles, the fac-similes of her own incoherent and disorderly mind.

“ TO THE MARCHIONESS OF MONTRESSOR.

“ Carlton-terrace.

“ DEAREST GEORGINA, — Come to me, or send me Lord Montessor, as soon as possible. I have had another blow-up with Sir Frederick, worse than the opera scene. I really think he is mad. Good Heavens ! how happy you are ! Aubrey adoring you as a woman, and revering you as a saint ; your husband confiding in you, and nobody finding fault with you.

“ I told you, Sir Frederick wanted me to set off with him to Mottram Hall ; but my cards were out for a *déjeûné* at the Willows. Besides, once away, and adieu to the confederation of the Rhine ! After much discussion, we came to a compromise : he to start immediately ; and I to follow as soon as I could, trusting to what might turn up in the mean time.

“ Last night, however,—he being engaged,

as I thought, at the House, as usual,—I returned from Alfred Montessor's *déjeûné*, where I scarcely spoke to the Princess, who only showed herself for half an hour, and would not allow her horses to put up ! Well, they all came back to tea at Carlton-terrace. It was the first night I opened the little tribune for the racing-table ; having ventured to move back Sir Frederick's Venus, on the suggestion of Lord Alington, who said such odd things : for the Venus was covered with dust, poor dear ! In short, the whole thing reminded me of 1829, before you grew sick and saintly, as Lord A. says.

“ Well, just as I had betted on the Jersey colours, and flung down my handful of balls, (and lost my money, *par parenthèse*,) who should appear at the door but Sir Frederick ! For the last six years, I never knew him join my parties after coming from the House. The worst of it was (and, by all that's sacred, accidentally) the Princess had dropped in ; and I must say, not more unexpectedly than unwished for, and quite contrary to our agreement : for, only that I want her for the service of the Confederation

this summer, I should certainly have cut her ; she is so very severe and despotic. However, she drew her lace mantilla over her face (you know her way) as soon as ever the ghost of Banquo appeared.

“The first thing that struck my husband, was the displaced Venus (his Canova). In moving her out of the way, Alfred Montessor had broken her nose, which he had fastened on with sealing-wax. Little Levison of the Guards had put his cap upon her head, Claude had corked *moustaches*, and Mrs. St. Leger rolled her black cashmir over the bust. You never saw such a wounded hussar ! It was *à mourir* ! We shouted laughing ; and this brought on a romping match ; and then, the *causcuse* was upset, and the cushions were all about the floor ; when, lo ! Sir Frederick started in, overthrew the racing-table, and, seizing Claude’s arm, asked him in a voice half suffocated with rage—

“ Is this one of *your* mischievous pranks, young sir.”

“ At this moment Mrs. St. Leger was pushed forward by the Princess (by whom she was *soufflée* with miraculous quickness), and passing her arm through Sir Frederick’s, with one of

her pretty *minauderies*, looked in his face and said, ‘ No, I am the criminal ;’ and pointing to the Venus, she added—‘ *Qui nous négligent nous perdent*,’—for you know the picture scene has got into the caricature shops. The effect was instantaneous. Sir Frederick disengaged himself, and rushed out of the room by the draped door, behind the alcove, which opens into his own apartments.

“ Of course you understand the *mot d’énigme* ? You remember his infatuation of three years back, before Mrs. St. Leger’s departure for Germany ; the diamond agraffe sent to me by Storr and Mortimer, by mistake ; his (Mottram’s) capricious cut, after showing her up by his devotion in a way quite unpardonable : when once a woman is *affichée* as the favourite of a public man, there is no retreat. Private flirtations pass unnoticed ; but I never yet knew a woman completely get out of the scrape, if inscribed in the pension-list—did you ?

“ The Princess’s conduct was *impayable* ; but the quickness with which the little St. Leger seized on the idea was still more clever. Lord Allington says she is, out and out, the most adroit woman in London ; and that people will

find out, some day, (as they did Lady Jane Trevor's beauty,) that she is anything but a fool.

" Well, dear, I sent them all away (the Princess had glided off before I could thank her); but I had a horrid night, and I now write to you from bed, not having yet rung for Félicité. I shall wait my sentence patiently. Men are too unreasonable! Mottram has nothing really to reproach me with; for, as for my *engouement* for my godson, that is too ridiculous! Good b'ye! I send this by Hippolyte—don't keep him—*et aime moi, comme je t'aime!*"

" F. MOTTRAM."

" P. S. Gracious Heaven! What do you think? Sir Frederick is off for the Continent! —Sailed this morning, at seven o'clock, from Tower-stairs! *Je n'en reviens pas*. Not a word, not a line! I had sent Félicité to tell Saunders that I wanted a groom to ride to my aunt Campbell's, when she returned with word that the second groom was ill, and that the first (some strange Irish creature that Mottram has taken into special favour) had gone with his master. The travelling-chaise, packed up for Mottram Hall, as was supposed, had taken them to the Tower-stairs at six; and the postilion had

brought back the carriage with the doors locked up, and the key kept. So, whether the chaise-boxes had been removed, and the secret drawers emptied, is unknown. The whole is a mystery !

“ His own man knows nothing about it. *He* slept out of the house, as usual, (the profligate !) after he had laid out his master’s things and heated the bath ; and he did not return till nine this morning (his master not intending to go till twelve). Nobody went with Sir Frederick but his new Irish groom ; a helper, observe, in the stables, the other day ! and the Figaro of the hackney-coach adventure on the opera night, as Alfred Montessor called him. All sorts of things came into my head. Can he have gone off with any one ?

“ Well ! there is a reprieve, at all events. I shall, I suppose, get a *protocole de mari*, as the Princess calls it, before long. In the mean time, I breathe, dear ; and the breakfast at the Willows goes on. I shall expect you : a *déjeûné* by daylight comes within your law ; and I am to let good Mrs. Medlicot hold a bazaar in the garden, for the benefit of her Timbuctoo Tract Society.—*Addio !* Once more, come to me.”

CHAPTER V.

TOWER-STAIRS.

FROM the scene, which Lady Frances had so inconsistently described, Sir Frederick Mottram had found his way to his own room, in a state of irritation, to which the antecedents of its immediate cause had powerfully contributed. A life, habitually harassing and unhealthy, had unstrung his nerves; and the agitations, public and domestic, of the last three weeks, were now summed up in a personal insult. Annoyed, therefore, to the uttermost pitch of endurance, he flung his full length on the sofa. The atmosphere of the close-curtained room was stifling; a lamp which burned in the adjoining bath-room, sent its rays dimly through the dense vapour of the heated water.

He lay with his face pressed on his burning hands; and his position, like the *local*, was

favourable to a painful indulgence in uneasy sensations. Dark thoughts, like stormy clouds, flitted across the surface of his mind, which, already disposed to magnify and distort every incident that had passed, was torn with regrets, self-reproach, remorse, and indignation. Its morbid functions, multiplying erroneous conceptions, exaggerated the absurd occurrences respecting the statue into premeditated ridicule, contempt, and scorn. The ruin of his hopes, his character, his affairs, swept through his dis-tempered imagination in frightful forms, with a rush and confusion of ideas that approached the very confines of insanity.

While lying thus steeped in misery, he heard, or fancied he heard, some one stirring in his bath-room. He sprang upon his feet, and immediately a door clapped sharply from within, as if some one had gone hastily forth. But there was still something moving and fluttering about ; and on entering the inner room, he saw his wife's favourite parroquet perched above the bath. The bird, alarmed at his impatient efforts to take it prisoner, eluded for some time his grasp, and fled, repeating its silly habitual phrase of

"*Aimes-tu Coco ?*" At length, however, he seized it, and, in his impatient spleen, crushed, and flung it into the water. "*Aimes-tu . . .*" gurgled once more in its throat, and then was heard no more.

Had Sir Frederick strangled the donor of the unlucky favourite, whose tones it had caught, he could not have been more confused or shocked. He felt as if he had sunk to the last point of degradation. The violence of his emotions, his gloomy imagination, led him to consider this act as little short of a crime. A revulsion took place in his whole frame; his ears tingled, the sight left his eyes, and, utterly worn out and exhausted, he sunk senseless to the ground.

How long consciousness had been suspended by physical debility, he knew not; but on recovering recollection, the daylight was already pouring through the crevices of the shutters. He arose, and threw open the windows. The morning air brought with it refreshment and restoration; and, with a mind gradually cooled down, he turned to seek his bed; when a paper caught his eye. It lay in the

middle of the floor, nearly opposite to the door of the adjoining bath-room. Mechanically, and without purpose, he stooped and took it from the ground. It was addressed to himself, and written with a pencil. The contents at once seized his whole attention:—

“Up and away! You think yourself miserable; you are but ill. You think yourself aggrieved; you are but dispirited. You blame others for the results of your own conduct. Your springs of life want new tempering; your mind needs refreshment, but you will find none at Mottram Hall: you will find there old associations, and you need new impressions. Leave England, then; leave it immediately: why not to-day? Could you start with Parry to the Pole, or with Lander to the burning plains of Africa; could you plunge into the unexplored forests of America, to tread the tangled woods of the Oswega, or slumber in the branches of the hemlock-tree; it were well and best. But if you cannot visit new regions, you can seek the old ones under new circumstances. Look to regenerated Europe; throw away the spectacles of faction, cleanse off the film of party, break the

thralldom of fashion ; learn to unlearn,—to feel, think, judge for yourself. Go forth to the world a man ; and not that mass of habits, prejudices, morbid refinements, and factitious wants, an English aristocrat, the pupil of old schools, the support of gone-by institutions.

“ I told you I would obey your call ; I have done so, but your petulance brooked no delay, and I missed you in your study. I have passed through your dissipated house as a public robber might, unobserved, unmolested. My vocation is to seek the wretched, to alleviate suffering wherever I find it ; in the golden saloons of the wealthy, as in the homely wards of the parish workhouse : you are miserable, and I am at my post.

“ Up then and away ! The morning breaks, the wind is fair, sails are unfurling, steam is rising. There is a tricoloured flag floating on the Thames ; it is the flag of a regenerated people. Try the effect of transition. Give to the winds the frivolous vexations which prey on your noble mind. The word of the age is, *En avant !* he who lingers last is lost.”

Sir Frederick read and re-read this singular

fragment: the identity of its author could not be mistaken. Disgusted as he was, even beyond satiety, with all that belonged to the world in which he was moving, the spirit, vagueness and mystery of the communication, the romance and enthusiasm which appeared to animate the writer, had the power of a spell. It was gracious to reflect, that some one did exist sufficiently interested in him to exert even so strange an interference; and the advice offered was in perfect accordance with the tone and temper of the moment. To embrace that advice, was at least a resolve; it *was doing something*: it removed the vacillation of purpose; it strengthened the helplessness of broken-down volition; it brightened the gloom of hopeless despondency.

The clock of the Horse-guards had now struck five; and a wild and warbling whistle, resembling the silver tones of a mountain flageolet, was rising from beneath the windows of the apartment. Some one, then, was up in the establishment. Sir Frederick listened with emotion and interest to the air, for it was one to which his mother's memory was attached.

It was by the singing of that air, that she had first won his father's affections. It was the beautiful Irish melody of 'Allein a Roon.'

To his inquiry, in a low but distinct voice, of "Who is there? who is whistling?" he was answered by Fegan.

"It's me, please your honor, of coorse, Sir Frederick, gitting riddy to attind your honor, to Mottram Hall, according to orders from Mounseer last night, sir!"

"Is there none up but you?"

"Sorrow christian, Sir Frederick, only the house-dog, poor ould Naro here!"

"Order the post-horses immediately, and awake no one."

"I shawl, Sir Frederick. But, axing your pardon, sir, in regard of the walley, who is not at home in respect of being out . . ."

"I shall take no one with me but you," was the answer.

The brush with which Larry Fegan was giving the last polish to his own boots, fell from his hands.

"Is it nobody but myself! to dress and undress your honor, and . . ."

Sir Frederick had already left the window ; and Larry's modest interrogatory was left unanswered. There was a rush of ambition from the heart to every pore of his extremities. The words died away on his lips as he half repeated his inquiry ; and he flew to execute his commission, repeating, " Nobody but myself — confidential, servant and own man to the Right Honorable ! Well, well, the devil's in you (Lord pardon me !) Larry Fegan, for luck ! And wouldn't wonder to see myself house-steward, and gentleman at large, before the year's out !"

Sir Frederick Mottram had changed his dress, and was seated in his carriage as the clock struck six. He stopped but for a moment, at the packet-office in the Haymarket ; and then gave his orders to the astonished Fegan, who, perched on the box in front, driving clouds of yellow dust from his gloves, his cravat pulled up to his ears, and his hat perched upon three hairs, repeated in a tone he meant to be important, his master's order, " Do you hear, my lad ? Tower-steers, if you plaze, and drive aisy !"

The postilion touched his cap, flourished his

whip, and galloped off. The transition was magical. The west end of the town, at that early hour, was silent and deserted, as a city swept by the plague, or sacked by war. The mansions were barred up, the club-houses closed : even porters slept ; while ladies ceased from troubling, and pages were at rest. The worshippers in the high mosques of profligacy had made their nightly offerings of vice and folly at its altars—(health, time, fortune, peace.) As the carriage passed Northumberland House, Sir Frederick sighed and closed his eyes. It was the last frontier of that world, for which he had lived ; for whose opinion he now suffered. It was the barrier of the west.

As the carriage rolled on towards the east of London, what life and activity presented themselves to view ! There, every house was open, every window bright. Every inhabitant was awake and stirring ; and industry was on the tiptoe of exertion ! Market-carts, almost poetical in their lading of fruit, herbs, and flowers, were led, some haply by the fathers of future peers, others possibly by embryo peeresses, destined to change the roses and lilies bestowed by

Nature's 'sweet and cunning hand,' for the *fleurons* of heraldry and the jewelled cap of rank: for such things have been, and must be, as long as youth and beauty have their price in the great market of passion or of profligacy.

But, in this bustling field of industry and of wealth, all was not equally bright. If 'in the midst of life we are in death' by the doom and sentence of Nature, the workings of society contribute also their share to the horrible and startling contrast. The gallows erected in front of the debtor's door of Newgate, met the eye and sickened the heart of the morbid and melancholy observer, as he passed along. One of the great tragedies of human existence—cool, dispassionate, legal murder—was about to be performed! Crowds thickened; avenues were densely peopled with eager spectators; some anxious to try conclusions with fate, and to learn by experience what may be that crowning mystery which terminates the long vista of all our hopes and all our fears; the greater number, intent only on a spectacle and a sensation.

The inhabitants of the neighbourhood, alone, took no notice of a scene, of too frequent occurrence to awaken curiosity, or to point a moral. Shopboys were cleaning windows; fishmongers and butchers were busily occupied unloading their carts for the adjoining market; and servant-maids were hurrying home with the comfortable and abundant breakfast of the tradesman's hungry, healthy family. Behind this exterior, was the cell of the condemned criminal, where, stretched on the rack of unrest, he listened to the dreadful toll of the bell which anticipated, while it announced the fate that awaited him:—there was but a wall between!

Sir Frederick Mottram, the privy-counsellor who had so often witnessed the royal ratification of such sentences; the legislator, who had so often by his vote checked the step of humanity and of civilization in their march towards a purified and enlightened justice, sunk back in his carriage, overcome and dispirited. An image had effected what argument had vainly attempted; he *felt*, what he never yet could *understand*; the vanity and the weakness of those wise saws and *ancient* instances, which legalized barbarity,

and sanctified selfishness with the borrowed attributes of a righteous judgment.

“ There is, I fear, something wrong in this !” he muttered with a sigh of deep suffering. “ This is a dreadful price to pay, even for the maintenance of order ! Life for life, was the stern law of Moses ; but life for a purse, for a toy, is hard to understand !”

The deep red colour of Lawrence Fegan, the flush of joy and of hope, faded to a deadly hue as *he* passed this scene of suffering. It brought him back to Ireland, to the drop of the gaol at Cork, where a near and dear friend of his own had, years ago, met his fate : such too might possibly have been his own destiny, had not want and hunger driven him to enlist as a fifer in an English regiment. His talent for whistling had probably saved him from a like ignominious death. He put the corner of his cravat to his eyes.

“ I say, master !” cried the postboy, addressing the dicky-box ; “ if we had been a little later, we should have seen the fun. I seed that ’ere fellow at the Fives Court, many a time ; and as fine a chap he was, as you would clap your eyes on !”

"So was Pat Macdermot," said Larry to himself with a suffocating sob.

The carriage now rolled on through the intricacies of that grand mart of enterprise, for which the whole world presents no parallel,—the city of London properly so called. The human tide was pouring along as full and strong as though it were noonday. Cars, carts, waggons, drays and stages, thronged and obstructed the narrow streets, almost impeding all approach to the Thames, which itself exhibits a spectacle of bustle and confusion still more imposing. The Thames, choked with its teeming vessels, floating to the metropolis the "wealth of Ormus and of Ind," and distributing to the remotest shores the endless comforts and commodities created by British industry, exerts a moral influence on society and civilization greater than all the blessings of its physical benefactions. It bears abroad on its tide, to all the nations and tribes of man, the products of a free press, the lights of science, the catechisms of liberty !

To the distempered imagination of Sir Frederick, the impressive scene took another and

a more sombre hue. He saw only laborious, toiling, suffering humanity, contending with nature for a miserable existence, tugging at the oar of sordid gain, and wasting the brief capability of sweet sensation which lies between the cradle and the grave, to provide, when most successful, for the vices of some spendthrift heir : —to perish in lonely penury and friendlessness, if it toils in vain. He put up his glass, and, among the grove of masts, the tricoloured flag of the new Belgian kingdom caught his eye. He accepted the omen as coincident with the counsels of the mysterious letter, and gave himself up to the packet agents, who were already at his side.

When Sir Frederick descended from his carriage, he left everything, as had been the habit of his travelling life, to his servant ; and suffered himself to be led through the narrow descent of the Tower-stairs, by one of those who wait there to secure the confused and ignorant passenger.

“ This way, my lord—this way, sir ! Ostend, sir, isn’t it ? Sails in ten minutes. The Talbot, sir ; the finest vessel on the station. Beautiful

weather, sir; wind fair. That is our boat coming up to the stairs."

"My servant and carriage," muttered Sir Frederick, almost led by the arm by the agent of the packet, yet shrinking from the coarse contact, and holding to his mouth his handkerchief breathing of *eau de Cypre*, which could not exclude the stench of other *eaux* of less agreeable perfume.

"Ay, ay, sir—never mind: I'll see all safe! We have several carriages on board already. I'll just see you into the boat, and then be back to look after your servant. Excellent breakfasts on board, sir. What name, if you please, sir?"

"Sir Frederick Mottram."

"Your servant's, sir?"

"Lawrence Fegan."

"Sir Frederick Mottram and Lawrence Fegan—Ay, ay, that will do, sir! Now, sir, if you please, give me your arm. Hope you won't forget the agent."

Sir Frederick mechanically put his hand in his pocket and gave the man half-a-crown. He seated himself in the boat; but the boatmen still

waited, on seeing another coach drive up to the gate. Sir Frederick ordered them to put off, in a manner that convinced them that they would be well paid for neglecting the new arrival.

He was already almost sea-sick. His imaginative recollection of never-failing suffering on all such previous occasions, the exhaustion incidental to want of rest and over-excitement, contributed to nauseate him to the uttermost prostration of mind and volition. On reaching, therefore, the Talbot, his only desire was to obtain a sofa and escape from the deck, which resembled a Noah's ark, and was already encumbered with numerous vehicles. He was therefore forthwith conducted into the den called the gentlemen's cabin, and placed on one of those hard horse-hair seats, by courtesy dignified with the appellation of a sofa.

Even before the steam-engine had given its preliminary shake to the vessel, or its paddles commenced their play, sounds and objects of disgust multiplied on every side, distressing to one whose most delicate and fastidious nerves had hitherto been spared such annoyances.

“ Orribili favelle,
Parole di dolore, accenti d'ira
Alti e fiochi,”

echoed on every side ; yet he soon ceased to hear them ; for he slept, or rather fell into that agitated and disturbed doze which wearied nature forces from suffering sensation, without abating its uneasiness.

The vessel had been advertised to sail at seven, but it was now past eight, and yet the anchor was not heaved. Boat was chasing boat, filled with tardy passengers, till the deck was crowded like the black-hole of Calcutta ; but Lawrence Fegan and the carriage were not yet arrived. The latter was on its way back, under convoy of the postilion, to its station in the coach-house on Carlton-terrace ; while the former still stood, the stare and the amusement of the idle group gathered round the iron gates of the Custom-house.

There are few heads that can stand a sudden revolution of Fortune, or gaze undazzled at the flash of the bright side of her wheel. Heads far sounder and wiser than that of Lawrence Fegan have mounted and grown dizzy, under

the influence of some sudden change which has raised struggling industry and hopeless and unproductive labour to places of high trust, to power, wealth, and distinction. Churchmen have never passed the ordeal unscathed. The Wolseys, the Lauds, and the Richelieus, were not proof against their dizzy elevation; and in Ireland there is a see, representing the power of the church of old times, with whose mitre a strait-waistcoat is almost proverbially associated.

The change recently undergone by the red-shanked *Garlogh* of Shanballymac, (for he was one whose brand of bastardy had never been effaced in the estimation of his native village)—by the boy who had been “up the mountain,” the *échappé* of the police-station at Mallow,—the fifer of the Coldstreams,—the maimed tiger of a neglectful master,—the patient of many hospitals,—the helper of the helpers of many stables,—was, to him, what the mitre of York was to the butcher’s son, or the crowning in the Capitol to Cola di Rienzi: it had upset him!

His morning’s drive; the parting stirrup-cup, presented by the postilion at the door of the Thames-street porter-house, as he gave his

orders with the pedantry of new inauguration to office, had assisted to confuse the head and bewilder the spirits of the Irish Sganarelle beyond all power of composure.

“ Take the carriage back quiet and aisy to Carlton-terrace,” he said, “ with my respects to the under-coachman, and my love to the second house-maid, and tell her I will send her a pretty present from furren parts, if one can be had for love or money.”

“ Here, sir, ish a very pretty present any lady in the land might be proud to vear,” said a long-bearded impersonation of the twelve tribes of Israel to Fegan, as the carriage drove off; and he dazzled his eyes with the display of a long and massive chain.

“ It ish all pure gold, mishter—virgin gold, I declare to my God! and only vone shovereign! —it will sell for double the monish.”

“ Here ish what his honour wants more than a chain,” said one of the children of Zion, and evidently the son of him of the golden chain—
“ Here ish the most beautifulest new travelling cloak and cap; and here ish a real gentleman’s dress-coat, fit for any noblemans in London: I

bought it of the vally-de-sham of a great lord only lasht night."

Lawrence was taken all alive, with all his weaknesses and all his vanities, his new and high aspirations, full upon him ! Reason, with her specious sophistry, furnished him with ready excuses for yielding to the temptations of folly. As groom, he was provided with a livery frock, it was true ; but, as *valet-de-chambre*, as ' travelling and confidential upper man,' the rank in which his fertile imagination had placed him, he was deficient in all the necessary paraphernalia. The idea passed, with the rapidity with which thought ever passes in an Irish head, when mounted by vanity and upset by ambition. He saw himself riding in the morning in his groom's frock, and figuring in his own clothes in the evening, after he had dressed his master. The cloak also, with its black and silken braids and tassels, and the showy cap, with its foreign cut and its golden band, were temptations unutterable, irresistible.

The struggle between vanity and prudence was but momentary. He had four sovereigns in his pocket, being nearly the whole of a sum

advanced to him for the purchase of linen by the house-steward. He looked at the *défroque* of the great lord; he examined the cloak and cap; and then, with a glance of cool, sly distrust, and with that self-satisfied Irish shrewdness which made him believe he could out-jew a Jew, he exclaimed,

“ Ah ! be aisy now, Mr. Shedrech, Misheek, and Abednigo ! Have I time to stand bargaining about your ould clouths, and the Right Honourable Sir Frederick Mottram, my master, waiting there below, talking to the captain of the ship ? Man alive ! ‘ time and tide stops for no man,’ as the saying is.”

Fegan cast an eye where his master was still standing, and satisfied himself that, as the steam was not up, he might delay a little longer : he remained, therefore, with the coat in his hands, while his imagination gloated upon the cloak and cap.

“ Now, what would you be afther axing,” he said, “ for the whole boiling, if a man was Judy enough to be willing to take it off your hands ?”

“ Five guinish—and the gould band vill burn for more,” said the father.

"You are giving it for nothing," cried the son, reprovingly.

"Five guineas! — five devils!" said Larry;
"I think I see myself, you ould Judas Iscariot!"

He did not, however, suit the action exactly to the word; for he placed the cap on his head, with the air with which Napoleon seized the iron crown of Italy; and turning to a little mirror in the basket of a pale-faced Italian boy, who was looking on, he arranged it to his fancy. Never did any mirror of dandy royalty, from Brighton to Petersburg, reflect a more self-sufficient or more self-satisfied form. Nor was the feeling altogether without foundation: his tall, well-framed figure became the cloak; and his very Irish face well suited the *gaillardise* of his foreign cap.

"Well, thin, what will you be afther taking for the cloak and cap, without any further jawing? for the tay-kittle there will be soon boiling, and I must be off like a shot."

"Vell, sir, as God is my shuge, three shovereigns is the lowest farthing; I vouldn't take lesh from my own fader, if I vash to die for it."

"It a'n't worth the money," said Larry, doubtingly, his eye fixed on the looking-glass.

"Here 's one von't think so," replied the Jew lad, pointing to a showy carriage that bowled up to the gate: "the Irish vally-de-sham on that 'ere coach offered us more monish yesterday."

"Here 's your money," said Larry, in a hurried tone; "and let's have no more of your gosthering."

Delighted with his bargain, he was hastening away to the packet, when the Jew boy ran after him with the coat, crying,

"Misther ! misther ! the packetsh von't sail this half hour; dere 's plenty of time ; von't you buy dish beautiful coat ? Look at it, sir ; itsh a lovely coat ! Try it ; and if it don't fit you, you shall have it for nothing."

The alternative was too tempting. He looked at the coat, and then at the Jew boy : "Well, sir, I *will* thry it, just to plaze you."

He gave the cloak to the boy to hold, and addressing a well-looking loungee who stood carelessly observing the transaction, he added, "Might I be afther throubling you to hould my coat, sir, for a minute ?"

It was to little purpose that Larry labour-

ed to invest himself with the toga of gentility; no effort could stretch it to the proportions of a far different stature from that for which it was made. Irritated by the fear of being too late in his attendance on his master, enraged at being mystified by the Jew boy (whose mirth had got the better of his cupidity), and disappointed at missing the bargain his vanity had counted upon as concluded, he flung the coat at the owner's head, and, snatching the cloak out of his hands, he burst out,

"Why, thin, ye grinning galoot! is it a Leprahaun you're thinking I am, or one of the good people, that you would impose on me a screed of a jerkin, that was made for some midge of a cratur like your black-muzzled self? Give me my things, sir, if you . . . Why, what's gone of the young gentleman that's houlding my coat?"

A general laugh from the by-standers replied to the question. Fegan looked round with dismay; the 'young gentleman' had disappeared.

The bell from the vessel tolled forth its immediate departure.

"Last boat for the Talbot, gentlemen!" cried the agent. "Now or never!"

The boat was already thronged ; but Fegan still stood, the image of consternation and despair. He had neither hat nor coat. The boat put off.

" Never mind, master," said a wherry-man, touching Larry's arm with his dripping oar ; " I'll put you aboard before the other boat can get there. Here, give me your hand. Hot weather, sir ; but put on your cloak, all the same."

The next moment, wrapped in his cloak, his head scarcely covered by his cap, Fegan was seated in the boat. Misfortune had sobered him : his position overwhelmed him. The vessel had cast loose ; the steam, which, a moment before, had poured forth in rushing volumes, suddenly ceased ; and the paddles commenced their dining rounds. Hurrying on board, he was obliged to double the waterman's ordinary fare ; and, fearing to encounter his master, he skulked forward among the servants and other tenants of what is called the second cabin.

Never was there made a more unprosperous voyage between the Thames and Ostend than that now performed, save only the one in which the unseaworthy Talbot was wrecked off

the Flemish coast, a few weeks afterwards. The substitution of this boat for the regular packet of the station, was one of those risks to which the British public is subjected more than the people of any other nation in Europe.

She had been the first vessel that ever had plied to Ostend on the commencement of steam navigation ; and the inferior construction of her engine, no less than the wear and tear of the hulk itself, rendered her a slow and dangerous sailer. She was now, it was said, taken up to supply a sudden emergency ; and her crew and appointments were as occasional as herself. The cabin was crowded to suffocation ; the deck was choked with carriages ; and before the ship had cleared the river, the weather, which had been squally, became decidedly foul.

Instead of fulfilling its promise of arriving that night, it was late in the following morning when the ship made its port, and gave up the ghosts of its wearied and sickened passengers, (pale, comfortless, but too happy to escape from their ' prison with the risk of being drowned') to the gaze of the loungers on the quay of Ostend.

CHAPTER VI.

OSTEND.

Letter -

" TO MESSRS. HARRIS, WILLIAMS, AND CO.

LINCOLN'S INN, LONDON.

——— Hotel, Ostend.

" Sir Frederick Mottram desires that a hundred-pound bank post-bill may be forwarded to him, at the above address, *instantly*.

" Should Mr. Harris have left town for Mottram Hall, the person who represents him in his office is requested to open the enclosed, and act upon it immediately."

(*Enclosure.*)

"Ostend, Waterloo Hotel.

" DEAR HARRIS,—Send me, without loss of time, a letter of credit for a thousand pounds upon some house in Brussels; (the hundred-pound post-bill, without a moment's delay.) Take the trouble of going to Carlton-terrace, and seeing Saunders.

Desire him to bring me my travelling-carriage, *just as it is*: I have the keys. If he does not find me here, he is to proceed with post-horses to the Bellevue, at Brussels.

“I am in the most infernally awkward position here that man ever was; but have not time for particulars, as I send this by a gentleman who is just starting for England by way of Calais. The post does not leave this most melancholy place till Saturday.

“You will receive my letter on Thursday night or Friday morning, and I hope before you start for Mottram Hall; that is, if you have not already heard that I had left London for the Continent,—to your great surprise, of course, as to my own. A sea-voyage was necessary to my health, and has already, I think, done me good: but the benefit derived is scarcely worth the purchase.

“I need not urge your immediate attention to this importunate request for money. I am here without a shilling, without a change of linen, or even a razor; owing to the blunders, and perhaps drunkenness, of a new Irish servant, who sent back the carriage which took me to Tower-stairs, instead of putting it on board.

“ The fact is, I am in pledge (and so is my watch), under a suspicion of belonging to the army of English scamps, who make this miserable place a refuge from bailiffs and policemen. My servant, too, to mend the matter, is before the *juge de paix*, accused of having stolen a cloak and a cap from a courier ; and being (I know not how or why) without coat or hat, (which he lost at the moment of embarkation,) is suspected of having escaped from the Hulks at Woolwich. The waiter is at my elbow, to take this to the gentleman who bears it ; therefore I can only add, that I am,

“ Yours, &c.

“ FREDERICK MOTTRAM.”

Letter II.

“ TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ.

—— Hotel, Ostend.

“ DEAR HORACE,— If you are amazed at the date of this letter, so am I. Talk of free will and moral responsibility !——But, to the point and purpose. I wish I could have anticipated the *espionage* of the newspapers, (which throws

every man's privacy open to the vulgar gaze of the meddling world, and which, by this time, has bruited to all Europe my departure from England, with all sorts of absurd and venomous additions;) and that it had been possible to give you an earlier account of my unpremeditated escape from that modern Babylon, London.

"I arrived here yesterday, just in time to scrawl a few lines to my man of business, for money; being most strangely without a shilling, actually provided with the necessaries of life by the confiding charity of strangers, and obliged to wait till Harris sends me the means of departure. Here I am, therefore, at Ostend, till the packet of Saturday arrives—except Mr. Fauche, (the British Consul, and an old Vienna friend,) should return from Brussels in the interim, where he most unfortunately is now absent. I have time enough, therefore, at my disposition to detail all my movements and predicaments.

"When I last wrote, it was in the hope of soon meeting you at Mottram Hall. Everything was prepared for departure on Tuesday morning; my carriage packed, my *nécessaire*,

money, books, &c. &c. all stowed in, and the horses bespoke; and having indulged Lady Frances in her whim of giving a breakfast at the Willows, before it was sold or let, I arranged that she should follow me, and that poor Emilius should be wholly left in the hands of his doctors and preceptor. I paired off with Winterbottam, and returned from the House earlier than usual, that I might write to you, and get through some other business: and I found *my* house a rendezvous of the elect, returning from a *déjeûné* at Norwood. Romping, carried on to the very verge of licentiousness, and high play, constituted the business of the night; and a new game, called a racing-table, (which has been recently introduced to shorten the process of ruin,) was in full activity.

“ There is a pretty little apartment in the farther end of the suite, which, pedantically enough, I have called the Tribune; because it contains the two Titians, the Murillos, the Chandos Correggio, with Canova’s Venus, which he executed for me when I was in Rome. But I cannot go on! Perhaps I should have treated the whole thing as an *enfantillage*: for this asso-

ciation of middle-aged matrons and foolish young men is the most puerile thing imaginable ; — the men, from constant frequenting such coteries, being as trivial as the women, and the women borrowing the free tone of the men.

“ In aggravation of such a meeting in such a place, Master Claude Hamilton and his play-fellows had mutilated and disfigured Canova’s superb work ; and that female Mephistophiles, the Princess of Schaffenhauseu, stood presiding over the whole mischief, in her wizard dress and veiled face, notwithstanding Lady Frances’s solemn promises to the contrary. I could not control myself. I was mad ! acted like a madman ; and, under the influence of I know not what spell—led by a sort of anonymous letter, counselling me to the hasty step I have taken—ordered the horses to the Tower-stairs, instead of the great north road, and embarked for Ostend.

“ Here I am, then, and hope to hear from you at Brussels, through which I must pass, go where I will ; but where that will be, I neither know nor care. Make no allusion, however, to the incidents I have touched on solely for your information. I want a total change

and regeneration of body and mind. I have done with the past, and am without one view for the future.

“ My present situation, (the last, one would think, reserved for a man with a rent-roll of twenty thousand a year,) if it was not so very provoking, would be very amusing, from its extreme absurdity. I arrived here after the most dreadful passage I ever made, and was almost carried on shore by the steward of the packet, who delivered me into the hands of I know not who : but there was music in the man’s voice, for it spoke of a bath and a bed. I plunged from one to the other, with a luxury of sensation dearly purchased, but still beyond price. I had desired the person who attended me to the hotel, to send my servant with dressing things, &c. &c. as soon as he had landed the carriage ; and, waiting for him, I got from the bath to the bed, and so dropped asleep. Such a sleep ! I have enjoyed none to equal it for many years ; deep, dreamless, death in counterfeit ! I believe I should have slept on till now, but that I was awakened by the sharp voice of a pert English waiter, to know whether I meant to travel by the *diligence* or the *treckschuyt*. I was some

time awakening to a perfect recollection of my situation, and almost unconsciously answered ‘Neither.’

“‘Then,’ he replied rudely, ‘you had better get up.’

“I *did* get up; started *sur mon séant*; ordered him to send my servant, and leave the room instantly.

“‘Servant!’ he replied; ‘there is no servant in the house, but the servant of the Hon. Patrick O’Reiley, who had been left by his friends with their carriage, as security for an unpaid bill.’

“‘My servant,’ I said, ‘is, or should be, with the carriage, if it is not yet landed.’

“The fellow grinned, and was making some impertinent reply, when a sailor-looking man bolted into the room, and asked ‘if I was the gentleman who *called* himself Sir Frederick Mottram; because, if so be, the Irishman what was aboard the Talbot was tooked up for priggig a cloak and cap, and he had sent me that note.

“It was a dirty piece of unfolded paper, which I copy for its curiosity:—

“‘SIR FRIDERICK,—There’s the greatest destruction going on, and sarious murthur, if you don’t come to my pertection immaidiately.

They have me up, plaze your honor, before a frinch justis of pace, that ha'n't a word of english in his mouth, no more nor a dog, and is swearing away the life o' me about a cloak I lawfully bought of a jew; and if you don't come to my help and salvation, Sir Frederick—I'm innocent as the child unborn, who is

‘ Your faithful servant till death,

‘ L. F.’

“ I desired the porter to say I would follow him immediately. He asked me for something for his trouble ; but I had given all the loose money about me to the steward of the packet, and actually had not a shilling on my person. The insolent waiter grinned and left the room, and I had to dress myself in the horrid clothes I had worn on board the packet. I never in my life was reduced to such *personal* inconvenience : you know that no man has ever roughed it less. I was still dressing, when the landlord entered the room, and civilly asked me for my passport. I had none : in my impatience to be off, I had never thought of it. The landlord looked suspiciously, which added not a little to

my impatient anger ; and I could not refrain from a *boutade* on the sort of liberty afforded by the new revolutionary government. The fellow was muttering something about the alien act in England and necessary precaution ; but I cut him short, by desiring him to show me to the hotel of the British Consul, Mr. Fauche. As the devil would have it, he had gone that day to Brussels, and was not expected for a week. ‘What is to be done?’ I said.

“ ‘You must return, I fear,’ said the landlord, ‘by the first opportunity. Here is a little bill prepared by my clerk, as we unluckily want this room, which is bespoke for a gentleman from Ghent.’

“ The bill for coffee, bed, bath, &c. was under a pound ; and yet I had not wherewith to discharge it. I told the man briefly the state of the case, and that I must remain in his cursed house, either till I got remittances from England, till the return of Mr. Fauche, or till some English family arrived whom I might know. The expression of the landlord’s countenance provoked me so, that—but the whole thing is too absurd.—I observed,

“ ‘As such things must rarely happen here, you may be incredulous, and ——’ ”

“ ‘Oh dear, no!’ he interrupted flippantly; ‘nothing so common. Gentlemen very frequently arrive at Ostend in the same situation. We have now in the house, the Hon. Mr. O’Reiley, who was left with a carriage in bail for twenty pounds, by his father, when he was suddenly called home. There are two or three other gentlemen whom you’ll meet walking on the ramparts, and who landed here much in the same predicament.’ ”

“ You see that I was at once put down on the list, with the Hon. Mr. O’Reiley and the gentlemen that walk the ramparts, by Jove! You can have no idea of my annoyance! Only conceive a man thus circumstanced, when he really and truly is without means; and owes his distress, not to accident, but to his own folly — or, worse still, his unmerited misfortune! Good Heavens! The reflection passed rapidly through my mind, and calmed me: but I could not get over the mortification that there should be nothing in my appearance, or manner, to bear witness in my favour. Oh! how small a part

of life and its vicissitudes is known to the prosperous and the rich !

“ As the man (who, after all, was perfectly justified in his caution, and was as civil as a man could be, who saw before him a scamp that had used his bed, bath, and breakfast, and had nothing to pay in return,) talked of a pledge, I pointed to my watch and seals, which lay on the table, and are worth an hundred guineas. ‘ Perhaps,’ I said, ‘ you will take charge of that for a day or two, until I can hear from London. I will write this moment, and send to Brussels to our ambassador for a passport.’

“ The man took up the watch and admired it ; looked at the seals, arms, crest, and cipher, — then at me,—but still doubtfully. It did not appear that his suspicions were removed ; and my indignation could hold no longer. I was in the very act of turning the man out of his own apartment, when my servant burst into it, followed by a fashionably-dressed but vulgarish young man.

“ Of the handsome, smart (rather too smart) groom, who left London with me the day before, there was not a trace. Fegan was in his

shirt-sleeves ; his face smeared and smoked with the grime of the steam-den, where he had been thrust when suspected of the robbery—for he was found on board dressed in a cloak and cap belonging to a courier, both of which had been stolen from Thomas's Hotel a day or two before. All that could be seen of poor Fegan's complexion bore the green and yellow tint of sea-sickness. His features were distorted by rage, and his black head was powdered with ashes. He rushed abruptly into the room, pushing aside the landlord ; whose respect for the master could not have been much increased by the appearance of the man.

“ ‘ I ax your honor's pardon, Sir Frederick,’ he said, ‘ for appearing before you, sir, like a poor Connaught spalpeen begging back his way home afther a bad harvest. But I just wish you to jidge, sir, the intire murthur and destruction those villains and Tories have brought on me ; robbing me on the quays of my hat and livery-coat, and making me a reçaiver of stolen goods, and hanging me outright : to say nothing of the plunder, and the shame, and the intire disagreece : and if it warn't for a greet Irish nobleman and his

Leedy and the Dochter here—long life to them! it's hung up I'd be, this day, in a furren land, like the poor boy that was stepping out on the gallows we left behind us in London. And plaze your honor, in regard of the cloak and cap, if I was dying this day, before God and his blessed Mother, and the Dochter here, I bought them honestly,—and the pride of me who has nothing but character and my honour, Sir Frederick—oh musha, musha !'

" Here poor Fegan's convulsive emotion absolutely stifled him; and the stranger, smiling, and putting him gently on one side, said— ' There, that's my good fellow! go and wash yourself: ' and turning to the landlord, he added— ' Let this poor man want nothing; Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, and myself, are answerable for him. I believe I have the honour of addressing Sir Frederick Mottram? I am Doctor Rodolf de Burgo, travelling with my friends Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty. The name cannot be unknown to you. Too happy if we can be of service;—am desired to say so, on the part of my friends. Understand the whole thing, sir, from what your

servant has said :—hurry of departure ; mistake of the carriage, and all that. Had the pleasure of hearing you speak in the House the night before we left London ; in great force. Went there with my friend Spring Rice. As to your servant, you must see the thing at once ; it was simply this : Jewed by a Jew ; bought stolen goods ; taken up. Fortunately I was passing at the time and heard the row. My compatriot *was* rather obstreperous. Three gendarmes could hardly keep him down. He recognized me, poor fellow ! I knew him when he lived with my friend Jack Aubrey de Vere, of ours. I was then surgeon of the regiment. But all is settled. The courier is off to Brussels, satisfied to get back his things. His name was embroidered in the inside of the cloak. I stepped forward in poor Paddy's behalf. And so there the matter ends. Can I be of further service ?

“ Although I did not altogether like the manner and *abond* of this flashy, but rather clever-looking person, I availed myself of the accident, to explain to him my position. Nothing could surpass his civility. He and Sir

Ignatius Dogherty, whom I have not yet seen, have answered for everything. The Doctor has given Fegan a coat of his own; and, strange to say, now that he is dressed in it, he resembles the Doctor amazingly. I, for my part, am indebted for much accommodation to these good-natured people; and I have since purchased a handsome *nécessaire de toilette*, with money advanced by the landlord on my watch. Being now satisfied that I am a man of fortune, an M.P. &c. &c., he is covered with shame and remorse, and wanted to return the pledge, which I refused.

“My new acquaintance have asked me to dine, and sent their cards and note of invitation in form; but I have declined. They remain here another day, on account of the lady’s health, who is an invalid; but I don’t want to add to the weight of the obligation, or to make an intimacy which may turn out, in the long-run, to be excessively *à charge*. The landlord has undertaken to provide me linen, and procure Fegan a new livery. I must stay here for my remittance; and am just as well at Ostend as anywhere else. The tranquil solitude of these

moss-grown streets, the sea, the air, the few simple Flemish faces passing my window, are all novelties. All the horrid English crew of the packet are off, in coach or boat, and have left the world of Ostend to silence and to me.

“ I shall write to you again from this, when I have made up my mind to something certain, so as to be able to give you an address. In the mean time, as ever,

Yours,

“ F. MOTTRAM.”

“ P. S. I fancy that no spark of the ‘ glorious four days’ has fallen upon the remote region of Ostend. I don’t think that they have the least suspicion that they have changed kings and governments. It is, very literally, the fable of the Frogs. How I nauseate the idea of Brussels!—*et pour cause*. I shall merely await my carriage there. The route from this place by Bruges and Ghent is new to me. In returning from Brussels, in Twenty-nine, we took the Calais road, which, I remember, was dreary and monotonous. Most probably I shall push on to the north of Germany. I have a carriage building at Frankfort—suppose I go for it? I really have no more important object in view, go where I may. Once more farewell, F. M.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE DOGHERTIES.

THE particular family of the human race from which the Milesian Irish derive their descent, and the period of their arrival in Ireland, are points which have been much and long disputed. The learning, the patriotism, the piety, and the pedantry of the country, have for a thousand years been employed unavailingly on the subject; and in that vast lapse of time, the Irish have suffered the indignity of seeing their *penates* shifted from Spain to France, to England—and, in spite of Sir Callaghan O'Bralaghan, to Scotland. If Giraldus Cambrensis, Nennius, Keating, O'Halloran, and Vallancey, with their various disciples, have fought the battle on the bloodless but obstinate field of controversy with doubtful result, Sir William Betham, the most recent of Irish antiquaries, has not been deterred from the attempt to set

the matter at rest (if such questions can ever be set at rest); and the evidence he has brought to establish that the Milesians are part and parcel of the great Gallo-British hive, which was known to Cæsar by the appellation of Celts, if not absolutely convincing, is of great weight and credibility.

“The Celts,” says Cæsar, “are handsome in their appearance, but their voices are disagreeable.” (So would the Irish accent of the present day, perhaps, appear to the refined Italian ear of some modern Cæsar.) “In their conversation they are brief and enigmatical [evasive], and they generally adopt mere allusion. They speak extravagantly when setting forth their own merits; but with contempt when they touch on the merits of others. They are proud, vain, and fond of exaggeration; but of acute understanding, and apt to learn.”

Whoever has lived much in Ireland, must perceive in this ancient portraiture of the Celts a strong resemblance to some of her sons,—the living representatives of a race which, unchanged and unchangeable, still flows through the ge-

neral population, like a stream of fresh water through the briny sea. It is unnecessary for the modern historian to alter a trait, to add a tint, or to deface a lineament. The red Dane, the fair Anglo-Norman, the small eyed, canny Scotch undertaker, the English adventurer, all distinctly marked by their own several physical peculiarities, make way for the impetuous course of the Celt, who, in the battle field abroad, in the row at home, in the cell of monkish learning, or in the cabinet of astute politics, (subtile but bold, sly but daring,) is still the same as when he first issued from the 'great foundery of creation.' There he is, as Cæsar has depicted his ancestors in Gaul, and as Henry the Second found them in Ireland.

To the foreign student of the physiological antiquities of man, to a Cuvier or a Humboldt, it might have been a treat of the highest order, had they encountered a fragment of the Celtic race, which fate or folly, necessity or 'a truant disposition,' had conducted to the shores of Belgium contemporaneously with the arrival of Sir Frederick Mottram.

The family of the Dogherties, like so many

other of the primeval tanists of Ireland, had, in the process of time, of native anarchy, and of foreign oppression, fallen from their high estate; and while some remained at home to submit in subtile servility to the intruders who had displaced them, others, of a more unbending spirit, had emigrated to foreign lands in search of independence, of adventure, or of bread.

The latter had been the fortune of General Sir Shane O'Dogherty, a favourite in the court of the Empress Maria Theresa. He had fought the battles of despotism, wherever liberty had raised its standard, during the course of sixty years; and having recently died in a garret at Vienna, covered with scars and decorated with orders, was buried by the charity of an Irish priest, and was forgotten by all save a second cousin twice removed, who claimed the reversion of the title, and had long watched, by every attainable means, the decline of its venerable and valiant possessor. This cousin was Sir Ignatius Dogherty, now of Shanballymac House, in the county of Kerry.

Among the mouldering ruins of the once bustling port of Ostend, rises a beautiful struc-

ture, called the *Pavillon des Bains*, erected by enterprise and taste on those ancient ramparts, so often covered with hostile phalanxes, but at present exhibiting on summer evenings a scene of as much peace and loveliness as ever was set off by the cloudless sunshine of a summer's sky.

Within this pavilion, poring over the news of Europe, or dipping into its periodical literature, sat some of the native quidnuncs of the town, and one or two Englishmen who had not altogether consulted their own choice in making Ostend their residence. Some took coffee, others tea, and others contented themselves with enjoying the place and weather from the windows.

Without, upon the esplanade, moved a bevy of English nursery-maids with their noisy charges ; for, alas ! noisy children will be found wherever there are pleasant walks and sunshine. Their happy mothers, dressed in Manchester muslins and Dunstable bonnets, gloated on the promising offspring ; and the bathing-women looked up from their bathing-boxes upon the new arrivals with the sordid calculation of anticipated gain.

Distinct from all these, sat Sir Ignatius

Dogherty and his party, betraying, amidst some diversity of feature, a general and common outline and character which marked them the descendants of a common stock. There was indeed an indescribable similitude of expression in the countenance of Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, their travelling physician Dr. de Burgo, and their self-instituted attendant 'for the nonce,' Lawrence Fegan, which might have puzzled a physiognomist; though the craniologist, perhaps, would have detected the organ of self-esteem in equally full development in all.

The Lady Dogherty, or (as she pronounced the name of the ancient chiefs of Enis Owen) Lady Dorty, sat preeminent in the group which graced the façade of the pavilion, full of the poetry of nationality. She was dressed in the prevailing hue of the 'first gem of the sea;' and in the produce of its looms. Her emerald-green tabinet pelisse, trimmed knee-deep with ermine, contrasted its faded winter glories with a summer hat, set off by a bunch of field flowers that were not precisely from the carton of a French *emballeur*. The costume, both in its solidity and flauntiness, was illustrative of the person and character of the wearer.

To the right of Lady Dogherty sat Sir Ignatius. If not the last of 'the rakes of Mallow,' (those jolly sporting Irishmen who gave their name to the merriest melody in Irish music,) he might have served for a tolerable type of that now extinct order. His jacket was bottle-green; his buttons of the brightest brass; his vest was variegated as the garment of Benjamin. His *truis*, (to use an old Irish name for an habiliment which delights in no more recent appellation at all suited to the *molles auriculæ* of modern ton,) his *truis* were buckskin, and his boots topped. His hat, if not too small for his head, was so worn as scarcely to cover it; and his cravat, by its voluminous folds, rivalled that of Banagher,—an Irish beau of proverbial celebrity, of whom it is traditionally reported, that his band contained "nine stone of starch!"

Sir Ignatius leaned as he sat on a very curiously knotted stick, a middle term between the English club and the Irish shilelagh; and rested a very rubicund cheek upon a still redder hand. Lawrence Fegan stood in waiting behind Sir Ignatius with a look of deference and pride; and all were listening to the discourse of

an eloquent narrator, who was holding forth undisturbed and uninterrupted, except by the occasional commentaries of his admiring auditors.

This orator was Doctor Rodolf de Burgo. He stood with his finger inserted between the pages of a Guide-book; and was giving a rather detailed account of the geography, topography, and history of the town of Ostend, with the conscious air of unborrowed knowledge, and the tone and attitude of an *improvisatore*.

"You now occupy, I may say," declaimed the Doctor, "the most westerly point of Europe."

"The most westerly," he repeated doubtfully to himself; "that is, *le plus oriental*."

"See that!" said Sir Ignatius. "Well, 'pon my daisy! I always thought that West Port, in county Mayo, was the most westerly point of the Uropian world: where the Marquis of Sligo lives, you know yourself, Doctor."

"I said, easterly," said the Doctor, referring to his book.

"Troth, ye didn't!" said Sir Ignatius, winking at Fegan; "but *na boclish*! niver mind—a slip of the tongue's no fault of the heart, as we say in Ireland."

"And fine sayings there is in it, Sir Ignatius!" said Fegan, touching his hat.

"Sorrow finer!" said the Baronet, "for thim that *has* good Irish, and isn't too conceited intirely to spake it like a man."

"Of coorse, plaze your honour," said Fegan, reddening, on the supposition that the Baronet had made a hit at what he deemed his own superlative English accent and phraseology.

"Sir Ignatius!" said his lady, angrily, "pray let the Doctor continue: no book *could* give you half the very valuable information you are now getting for nothing."

"For nothing!" sighed Sir Ignatius, (*aside*;) "two hundred a-year and travelling expinses; and she calls that nothing! Oh! marciful Moses!"

Lady Dogherty deposited her coffee-cup on a salver, which was presented to her by Lawrence Fegan, who had constituted himself on service since he had obtained her protection.

"Mr. Fegan," said Sir Ignatius, "might I trouble you, at the same time, to get me a little drop of . . . what do you call spurits in German, Doctor?"

"Schnaps !" replied the Doctor, snappishly. "But we are now standing, as I observed, Lady D., on the extreme eastern point of Europe. For the rest, Ostend is four leagues from Bruges, three leagues from Nieuport, and twenty-two leagues from Brussels."

"I'll trouble you for small change for *that*," said Sir Ignatius.

"For what, pray?" asked the Doctor impatiently and peevishly.

"Why, for *leagues*; divel such a word iver I met in the Universal *!"

"A league means three English miles, Sir Ignatius," said the Doctor, smiling at Lady D. "The sea washes these ramparts in all seasons. Nothing can be more sublime or picturesque than the ocean-view from them!"

"Och murther!" groaned Sir Ignatius, looking up for sympathy to Fegan; "and the view from the Cove of Cork and the top of Mangerton!"

"The *écluses* are also very fine," continued the Doctor: "they serve to discharge the waters of the canal of Bruges, and to resist the incursions of the ocean."

* *Id est*, "Universal Spelling-book."

"Why thin, 'pon my daisy!" said Sir Ignatius, "they're no great things, no more nor the mare that ran for the whisky, compared to the locks of the Grand Canal, or the Royal, of Dublin. If you seed the thirteenth lock, for instance, or Hazel Hatch, or Puckstown in the county Kildare, it's little you'd think of thim *make believes*, with their Frinch name."

"I suppose they are of modern invention?" said Lady Dogherty.

"No," said the Doctor; "they were built so far back as 1660."

"When was that?" asked Sir Ignatius, yawning.

"This port as you now see it," continued the Doctor with the emphasis of a cicerone, and overlooking or disregarding the embarrassing question of his patron, "is a monument of Joseph the Second."

"Who was Joseph?" asked the persevering Sir Ignatius pertinaciously.

"The Emperor of Germany," said the Doctor petulantly.

"Are we in Germany now, Doctor?" asked Sir Ignatius.

"If you will stand where I am, Lady Dogher-

ty," continued the Doctor, "and make use of this telescope, you will perceive that the coast of Ostend forms a straight line. The entrance of the basin is difficult, and the vessels are obliged to pass between two jetties by an opening so narrow, that the attempt is dangerous when the wind is contrary."

"May the divel fly away with them for jetties!" said Sir Ignatius with ill humour; "for it is to *thim* we owe that bumping and thumping, and throwing up the lives out of us—saving your prisine, my lady! — with that *sag*-sickness that's left me as wake as a child."

"Oh musha! no wonder," exclaimed Fegan, with a deep sigh.

"Where you see the flag, Lady D. is the point of embarkation for England," observed Doctor de Burgo.

"I wouldn't care, thin, if I was embarking back this blessed evining," said Sir Ignatius, under the peevish reaction of his rum punch and glass of schnaps, addressing himself to Fegan: "and if I thought I could get by long say from this to Shannon harbour, I wouldn't desire better than to lave this ould raggamuffin place with the first fair wind!"

"It would be great luck, Sir Ignatius; for Ostend is a poor pleece surely, sir," said Larry, touching his hat and making a grimace of contempt; "and of coorse no ways compayrable to the Bee of Dublin."

"There is something mighty touching in the ruined greatness of this fine ancient old Flemish town," said Lady Dogherty.

"I wish the Doctor would give us a Flemish account of it," said Sir Ignatius; "for I am sick of having nothing to do in it, and nobody to help me."

"It is a town of great historical interest," said the Doctor. "It was long a place of great importance. In 1583, it was regularly fortified by the Prince of Orange."

"The Prince of Orange!" repeated Sir Ignatius, starting. "See that!—Well, the world is not wide enough for ould Nosey, any way! What the divel brought him here!"

"But Ostend is most celebrated for the famous siege which the Dutch sustained in it against the Archduke Albert. It lasted three years and three months. The Duke, who fought gallantly, was accompanied by Isabella the Infant of Spain."

"Poor little dear!" yawned drowsily Sir Ignatius: "they had better have left her in her cradle—poor child!"

"When the Princess advanced to the spot most exposed to the fire," continued the Doctor, too much occupied in showing off to hear what was said, "she wore a cuirass."

"She did right," muttered Sir Ignatius; "and queer enough it must have been to see her in it—poor babby!"

"But when we get to Brussels, Lady D., you must read the history of Ostend. I will draw you up a little abridgment of the Low Countries. Suffice it for the present to say, that the Spanish general Spinola took the town in 1604; that the Dutch lost, by fire, sword, and pestilence, thirty thousand men; that the besiegers fired 150,000 *coups de canon*; and that the city did not capitulate till it was reduced to a heap of ruins."

"Divel mend it!" exclaimed Sir Ignatius, as he dropped off into a doze, heartily sick of the history of Ostend; while Lawrence Fegan listened with increasing attention: the Doctor proceeded—

“The Emperor Charles the Sixth established at Ostend the famous Company for trading with India, which excited so much jealousy in the Dutch and English merchants. In consequence of this rivalry, it was regulated at Ostend in 1731,——no, at Vienna,” (here the Doctor flung an eye on his book,) “that the Company should cease their operations; and, in one year, two thousand five hundred inhabitants quitted the city for ever!”

A loud snore from Sir Ignatius accused his indifference to the narration, and suspended its progress.

“What a miraculous memory you have, Doctor!” said Lady Dogherty. “Nothing escapes you! Your friend Lady Dixon used to say that you were a walking library. How often have we talked of you in our walks by moonlight! She calls you the most talented creature the world ever saw, not excepting her friend Byron, or Tommy Moore; for she knew them both intimately, and can show their writing in her album.”

“Poor Lady Dixon was partial,” said the doctor with a conceited and satisfied smile,—“too, too partial.”

Lady Dogherty looked down, and sighed ; after a short pause, she added, "She was not insensible to genius. The day I left Brighton she showed me your beautiful lines on the orange-tree (as good as anything Byron ever wrote) with the happy allusion to that tree bearing at once fruit and flowers. Did you see the lines she wrote underneath ? —

' Oh ! woman's heart was made for minstrel's hands alone ;
By other hands when touch'd, it yields not half its tone.' "

" And are *you* of that opinion, Lady Dogherty ?" asked the doctor in a low insinuating tone.

' Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes,' filled up the pause ; which was shortly after interrupted by Fegan, who aroused Sir Ignatius, by gently touching his shoulder, and observing,

" I ax your pardon, Sir Ignatius ; but here's my master, the Right Honourable Sir Frederick, coming up towards us."

Sir Ignatius started and rubbed his eyes. The doctor opened the book he held in his hands, and fell to peruse it with intense abstraction ; while Lady Dogherty settled her frills and her flowers with a minute attention to effect.

The elegant form, the easy *laissez aller* air, and peculiar character of countenance of Sir Frederick Mottram, would, all over travelled Europe, have stamped him a member of the English aristocratic caste; while the deep melancholy and languid look spread over his face, would, by foreign prejudice, have been ascribed to English *morgue*: by romance, (such romance as Lady Dogherty's,) it was translated into the highest touch of sentimental refinement. One only incongruity disturbed the perfection and unity of his appearance, and that was the disproportionate height of his shirt-collar, which rose above his ears, and the profusion of linen that descended even to the extremity of his fingers. He passed on, with a loitering step and folded arms, the observed of all observers,—himself observing nothing, and apparently lost in deep abstraction and moody thoughts.

“Who is he at all? what is he?” asked Sir Ignatius, roused into a perfect ‘waking consciousness’ by his lady’s nudges.

“It is Sir Frederick Mottram,” said Lady Dogherty, “our new friend.”

"Why, thin, a conceited-looking chap he is," returned Sir Ignatius, looking after him. "Sorrow know I'd know him again; and it would be hard for me, since I never saw him before, though I lint him my shirt, to oblige the doctor—my dress shirt."

"He is an elegant-looking creature," said Lady Dogherty. "When he turns again, the doctor must introduce us."

In the mean time Fegan had run after his master, and having followed him for some paces bareheaded, at last ventured to address him:—"Them 's the Irish gentry, Sir Frederick, if you plaze."

"The who?" interrupted Sir Frederick, turning sharply round.

"Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, Sir Frederick, and Doctor de Burgo, who—"

"Oh, so! where are they?"

"Them is they, sir, sitting on the binnch forenent the tay-house, hard by convanient, Sir Frederick."

The next moment Sir Frederick stood before the party, and drawing off his hat in a straight line with his head, addressed them in a few

words of courtesy and gratitude. Sir Ignatius stood bareheaded, with a look of great deference, notwithstanding Lady Dogherty's nudges, and the example of the doctor, whose *sang-froid* was evinced by his remaining buried in his book, and (of course) unconscious of the approach of the stranger. When forced, however, to take cognizance of the fact, the doctor's start, look, and close of the volume were a perfect rehearsal of the scene of Joseph Surface's surprise on the appearance of Sir Peter.

Sir Frederick Mottram's thanks, brief and pithy, were soon made; his apologies soon offered; and he was already taking up his first position, for escape, when a movement of Lady Dogherty's rendered it impossible. She insisted that he should take Sir Ignatius's place, between herself and Dr. de Burgo: "It is some time, Sir Frederick," she said, "since I had the honour of meeting you."

Sir Frederick, not aware of the circumstance, made a slight inclination of the head to this unexpected recognition.

"Oh then, no wonder if you should not remember it," continued her ladyship with a deep

sigh ; “ you must think me greatly changed since then. It was at the Castle, Sir Frederick, on Patrick’s night. It was my first saison in Dublin. I was then Miss Kearney, of Fort Kearney, county Kerry. The poor Duke always called me Kate Kearney. You knew the Duke of Richmond, Sir Frederick : one of the best lord-lieutenants, and a talented creature.”

“ I had that honour ; but I was then quite a boy, and went to Ireland merely for a holiday recreation, with my tutor.”

“ There niver was such a viceroy, nor niver will, past, present, or to come !” said Sir Ignatius. “ He was at our house during the whole of his visit to Killarney, with his shute, and the young A. B. C.’s. as they signed themselves in the book in our bar.”

“ Hem ! an album !” said Lady Dogherty, nudging Sir Ignatius ; “ an album, in which we enter the names of all illustrious travellers who visit us.”

“ Call it what you plaze, Lady D.” said Sir Ignatius, with a wry face, and withdrawing his foot from the pressure of hers.

“ Well, Sir Frederick, as I am after telling

you, the divel of such rollicking times ever we seen in Kerry since :—and it wasn't ould Sneyd the wine-merchant that was the worse of it, any how ! Would you believe it, Sir Frederick, I paid Sneyd, that year, fifteen hundred pounds for port and claret ; to say nothing of the wishkey (parliament and poteen) ! Well, God be with the times, when a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was not ashamed to prefer a sup of hot, the true native mountain-dew, 'bove all the wishwash that ever came across says !”

“ Do you know the Duncannons, or the Dorsets, or the Devonshires, Sir Frederick ?” interrupted Lady Dogherty in great confusion, and with much abruptness. “ I hope they are all well ? I had the honour of dancing with the Duke at a ball at Lismore ; and he did me the honour of calling on me the day after.”

“ Tell Sir Frederick, Kitty dear,” said Sir Ignatius, chuckling, “ about your mother's tumbling down stairs to recaive his Grace ; and her broken nose ! and the brown paper steeped in spurrits, and she smelling of wishkey like blazes ! She'll make you die laughing, Sir Frederick ; 'pon my daffy she will !”

Fegan thrust his handkerchief into his mouth. Lady Dogherty was ready to sink.

"Sir Ignatius, how can you suppose that Sir Frederick would be amused with such nonsense!"

"Nonsense, woman! why it was the fun of the world, and was fit to put in a book!" replied Sir Ignatius: "and I'm sure!"

"I hope you are fond of reading," interrupted the Lady Dogherty, endeavouring to draw off Sir Frederick's attention from her husband. "If we can be of any use to you in that way, pray command us. Sir Ignatius has bought a very pretty ambulating *bibliothèque de voyage*. It was selected by our friend the Doctor here, who, as you see, Sir Frederick, is a very book-worm."

The Doctor rose, closed his book, and replied laughingly—"Not a worm, Lady Dogherty; anything but that. The fact is, I read running."

"And galloping too," said Sir Ignatius. "I'll ride and read the Doctor gainst any man in England, be he who he may."

"Life is short, and art long," said Doctor de Burgo, shrugging.

"And time," said Sir Frederick dryly, "is the capital of talent, and should not be suffered to lie idle a moment."

The Doctor bowed; Lady Dogherty flirted her large green fan, and smiled; and Sir Ignatius yawned with all the sonorous vociferation of 'a voice from St. Helena;' while Fegan, touching his hat, made the sign of the cross over Sir Ignatius's 'capacious mouth'—a manoeuvre of devotion against the entrance of the unclean spirit usual on such occasions among the lower Irish.

At that moment a lady, accompanied by a female attendant, and followed by a foreign chasseur, passed before the party, and attracted their attention: they too caught her's; for she held her glass to her eye with a pertinacity of notice more marked than well-bred; which drew from Lady Dogherty the observation that "it was certainly some one who knew them."

The lady was simply and gravely dressed in a black pelisse and bonnet; yet her air was distinguished, and her walk perfection.

"Devilish nice foot and ankle!" said the Doctor, looking after her; "steps out like a race-horse! She certainly does know us, Lady D."

“ Can it be our friend of Brighton, the Ambassador?” asked Lady Dogherty ; or dear Lady Anastasia’s cousin, the Duchess?”

“ Why, thin, don’t you know who it is ?” asked Sir Ignatius. “ Don’t you remimber the Don Whiskerandos there, that follies her? Sure, isn’t it the Princess,—the German Princess we met at the opera, who sat in one of her own carriages all night, on board the packet? What’s this they call her?”

“ The Princess of Schaffenhhausen ! to be sure, so it is !” said the Doctor ; “ the least dumpy German woman, by the bye, I ever saw. That’s a capital idea of Byron’s ; I hate a dumpy woman ! Do you know the Princess, Sir Frederick ? If so, may I beg an introduction?”

Sir Frederick replied in the negative, and then abruptly bowed and took his leave ; while Fegan, touching his hat to his new protectors and compatriots as he passed them, followed his master.

The party looked surprised at the suddenness of Sir Frederick’s adieu ; and Sir Ignatius exclaimed—

“ I say, Doctor, did ever you see such a Don

as that, with his snuff-the-moon look ? Would any one think, now, that it was my shirt he's gallivanting away in—my fine new, baby-linen-warehouse best shirt, never worn since washed ; or that it's your new black silk stiffner he's philandering off with, and my lady's white French tamboored cambric pocket-handkerchief peeping out of his pockut ?—and not as much as 'Thank ye,' or 'I'll see you by and by,' or 'Will you take a glass of any thing?' nor even an illusion to it ! Well, 'pon my daisy ! that's a cool chap ; like the rest of them English quality, who'll take all from we Irish, and divel a word of thanks after ! What did I ever get for the shell-work grotto, framed and glazed, and made by the Ladies of the Ascension, that I gave the Marchioness when she put up at my house ? or for the picture of 'Maria and her goat,' worked on white satin by the Ladies of Mercy at Cork convent, that I won at a raffle, and gave to Lady Mary, in regard of the place I expected ?—or what will ever ye get, Kitty Dogherty, by your great friend, Lady Anny Statius Mac Queery, that wore the wheels off our bran new carriage at Brighton, and stifled the life out of

me by stuffing herself into our little fly every night ; who made you ask all her fine frinds to your party ; who laughed at Lady Dixon, and thin refused to prisint you at Coorte ! or get you invited, like the Connors and Smiths, to the Queen's balls ?”

“ She did the next thing to it,” said Lady Dogherty ; “ she got us her cousin's the Duchess's box at the opera, on that famous Saturday night.”

“ And if she did, divil thank her ! didn't you pay six guineas to What-d'ye-call-'um the bookseller for it ? and wouldn't wonder if she went snacks.”

“ There were those, Sir Ignatius, who would have paid fifty guineas for such a distinction !”

“ Why, then, greater omadauns they ; and I appale to the Doctor here. Why, then, blood alive ! what's gone with the Doctor ?”

Sir Ignatius, during this dialogue, had been watching a lugger through his telescope, as it entered the harbour ; and he had not noticed the Doctor's departure, nor the significant whisper of the lady which had instigated it.

Passing her arm through her husband's, Lady

Dogherty now led the way towards their hotel ; giving him, on the road, one of those lectures on vulgarity, foolish allusions to past times, and similar offences against her notions of propriety, to which the Baronet was more accustomed than submissive.

Sir Ignatius was a gentleman 'upon compulsion,' though a baronet by descent ; and while his 'new honours' had not yet clung to him 'by the aid of use,' the habits of his past life and the exigencies of the present frequently placed him in what, in modern political parlance, is called a false position ; from which the tact of Lady Dogherty, her admonitions and reprehensions, in vain endeavoured to extricate him. Lady Dogherty was 'a real gentlewoman bred and born.' As Miss Kearney, she had flirted through the garrisons of Cork and Kerry during the last twenty years, and having become *à charge* to her nephew Phineas Kearney, of Fort Kearney, Esq., and finding the officers less flirtable than formerly, she had submitted to sacrificing her refinement, talents, and gentility, to become Lady Dogherty of Shanballymac House (the name of a new unfinished lantern-built square edifice, which stood 'alone in its glory,'

in the midst of a black bog, near the village of Shanballymac).

This mansion had been intended by Sir Ignatius as the Tusculum of his learned leisure, where he meant to pass the residue of his days in sauntering to the town of Shanballymac, drinking whisky-punch, attending the Mallow races, and occasionally, 'in the glimpses of the moon,' revisiting the Stag's Horns,—a firm in which, if he was not a sleeping partner, he was at least an interested admirer and habitual frequenter.

But if man proposes, woman disposes. The second year of their marriage had already commenced, and Sir Ignatius had not yet seated himself in his mansion. He had passed a month in Dublin during 'the Castle season,' two at Kingstown, three at Bath, four at Cheltenham, and three at Brighton, where Lady Dogherty had been sent by the physicians for her health, which, in spite of appearances, was decreed to be eminently delicate. In this last place she had become acquainted with Dr. de Burgo; and at his suggestion she was now going to try the waters of Baden: having first secured his medical services on the journey, for

a remuneration, of course, utterly inadequate to the value of his immense talents, and the extensive list of patients he was kind enough to abandon for her sake !

Lady Dogherty had hoped much for Sir Ignatius's improvement, from the society, conversation, and accomplishments of their clever medical attendant. As yet, however, Dr. de Burgo had treated him with silent indifference; or only noticed his blunders to laugh, and his vulgarities to sneer at him. He had, at once, discovered that Lady Dogherty was *chef en second*; and that Sir Ignatius was accessible, if need were, through his love of a 'sup of hot,' and his fear of the cholera. These motives were sufficient levers for the Doctor to act upon; and with the power of indulgence, privation, and terror which they gave him over his patient, they enabled him to see his way, without giving himself any farther trouble in managing, for his own purposes, his employer—so long as it might be necessary to take the trouble of managing him at all.

To abbreviate this interval and hasten his future rise in professional life, he had now left

his party, and followed and sought Sir F. Mottram with the design of doing away, as he best might, the impressions which he felt the low breeding and coarse vulgarity of his Irish patient must have produced on the English gentleman.

Doctor de Burgo was a specimen of a peculiar genus not rare among the medical tribe. His *savoir faire* far exceeded his *savoir*. He was, in fact, a mere impersonation of charlatanism in its most striking, though not in its coarsest characteristics. Rapid in perception, quick in adaptation; seeing at a glance the weaknesses of others, skilful in concealing his own; gifted to amuse, but prompt to injure; he was morally, as professionally, more bent upon watching the effect he was producing, than delicate as to the means by which it was produced. Urged by the restless energies of an implacable vanity to seek, and even to 'command success,' his vengeance against all that crossed him, even accidentally, in his path, was enduring and implacable. Without any of those sterner principles which might have impeded the march of one of more elevated sen-

timents, he found no difficulty in mastering the feeblenesses of all classes: but while, with seeming frankness, he blinded his dupes, he employed them perseveringly to serve himself and to crush his rivals. In the pursuit of eminence, he counted more upon mental than bodily infirmities; and taking in turn the colour of every prejudice, he was amusing with the idle, canting with the pious, politic with the factious, and sentimental with the imaginative. By an adroit display, also, of professional technicalities, that rarely committed itself to a fact or an opinion, and by a ready complaisance to wishes intuitively divined, he passed on the superficial for superskilful, and on the feeble for more than kind.

Thus gifted, had his lot been cast in a great metropolis, he might have early become the oracle of a court, the dispenser of ether and opium, gossip and scandal, to dowager royalties and gentlewomen in waiting; and would have reached that envied round in the professional ladder, which gives in substantial profit all that it refuses in personal respectability and professional esteem. As yet, however, fortune had

not been favourable to the exploitation of these qualities; and wanting the opportunity for introduction into the higher walks of society, he considered himself fortunate in having captivated the attention and confidence of Lady Dogherty, whose landau and livery-servants had established to his perfect satisfaction the fact of her command of wealth.

Sir Frederick Mottram had gained the strand beneath the ramparts, and was pursuing his way with a slow, measured pace, so absorbed as to be almost unconscious that the evening tide was advancing on his path and breaking at his feet, when Dr. de Burgo overtook him (it might have been thought) more by chance than by predetermination. He touched his hat to one whose reception was anything but encouraging, and addressed him with a careless familiarity, founded possibly on a previous resolve not to be rebutted.

"A charming retreat this, Sir Frederick, from the ramparts; that type of Margate, and all such horrors, with its tea-and-muffin-shop. Good fun though, sometimes, with its snobs and originals; but there is no escaping the fel-

city-hunting and most obtrusive subjects of his Britannic Majesty, anywhere, 'from Indus to the Pole,' as the poet says."

"It is difficult," said Sir Frederick coldly, and looking on his watch.

"Oh, impossible!" said the Doctor, either not feeling or not noticing the retort. "But I am glad to see you, sir, consulting the oracle, keeping your eye on the enemy. To a constitution like yours, Sir Frederick, time is everything. Had I the honour of prescribing for you, I should be more anxious to regulate your hours than your diet; and to prescribe regular periods for air and exercise, rather than drugs."

Sir Frederick smiled, and threw his eyes upon the speaker, whose countenance had the sharpness, the quickness, and the malice of a monkey's. The Doctor was, as usual, looking for a weakness, an absurdity, an opening, in short, through which to attack the great man with whom he had become accidentally acquainted, and whom he had already foredoomed to be a stepping-stone on which he should mount to professional, social, or any

other supremacy; for his vanity had no predilections, and his ductility was applicable to everything.

"You think I am an invalid?" said Sir Frederick, almost diverted from the disagreeable thoughts of the last ten minutes, conjured up through the irritating associations connected with the appearance of the travelling Princess.

"No," said the Doctor, "not that; not a valetudinarian; but you have the true intellectual temperament. You pay the penalty of a superior organization, in common with the Romillies, the Byrons, and all that are wisest, wittiest, and best."

Sir Frederick stifled a sigh, and slightly bowed.

"It is curious enough to consider the human reptile — or god — in all its varieties, from its earliest organization to its most perfect development! You are aware, I suppose, that man is originally a tadpole?"

"No, indeed!" said Sir Frederick, smiling: "I was not aware of that humiliating fact."

"'Tis all true, though. We are all reptiles at our origin."

"And some continue so to the end," said Sir Frederick laughingly.

"Just that, by Jove! The whole is a pretty humbug; and yet—ahem!"

He turned his sharp eyes to search for an expression in his companion's face, by which he might discover whether his cue was to be the dogged orthodoxy of the church-and-state tory, the philosophy of the materialist, or the scepticism of the man of the world. Sir Frederick looked grave, as one of the Oxford school, and moreover a considerable lay-impropriator, should do.

"And yet," continued the Doctor, "'a mighty maze, but not without a plan,' as Pope says: while it bewilders the philosopher, it teaches the Christian a mistrust of his own blindness. In short, as the infidel Voltaire observes, this best of all possible worlds is ——— However, one cannot doubt, that 'whatever is, is right;' call it fate, necessity, or Providence. Your opinion, I dare say, Sir Frederick?"

"Not exactly," said Sir Frederick, with whom, at that moment, all that *was*, was wrong.

"At all events, it is unavailing, and some-

times perilous, to drop the lead too deeply. The fools will always have the best of it."

"Not always," replied Sir Frederick; "the rogues come in for their share."

"Humph! Why, yes!—Oh! by the bye, Sir Frederick, you must have been amused by that specimen of a wild Irishman, my very new friend (for I only saw him for the first time a day or two back), Sir Ignatius Dorty, or Dogerty, or Dogberry. Circumstances of a very delicate nature, *entre nous*—in short, a foolish, but devilish pretty girl, mistook my professional interest for—you may conceive: but let that pass, as Scott has it. The girl must die all the same; but, in the mean time, you know, I thought it a good plan to travel, that is, till my friends the Tories come in: for I have the solemn promise of a friend to do something for me in the King's medical household, as soon as the blow-up comes; and things cannot go on much longer on the present Whig tack. So I accepted Lady Dogherty's proposal to accompany her abroad; not, indeed, so much in consideration of the very liberal sum I am to receive, as because her case is singular and important.

I am writing on the subject: She is really an interesting person, and as celebrated as the *Biondina in gondoletta* of Venice; for she is the *Biondina* of the lakes of Killarney, the original of the Kate Kearney, sung by Mrs. Waylett—charming little creature, Mrs. Waylett! But, with a thousand good and amiable qualities, poor Lady Dogherty is a *little* quizzical, a little *too* blue.”

“A little *too red*, I should say,” observed Sir Frederick. “She looks like a moving plethora.”

“She is dying,” said the Doctor, gravely; “but not of that.”

“Dying!” said Sir Frederick, smiling like Cassius, as one who ‘mocked himself, and scorned his spirit, that could be moved to smile at anything.’”

“Yes, actually dying—though slowly. She has lost a lung.”

“A what!” asked Sir Frederick.

“A lung,” replied the Doctor. “She was *poitrinaire* from her cradle; neglected, or improperly treated; fell into the hands of a Dublin doctor, or rather surgeon, of the old

school; a dogged operator, a fellow with the physiology of a butcher. The truth stared me in the face. I saw it, as if she lay before me on a dissecting table. Well, she was given over; sent to Cheltenham, to die out of the way; came to Brighton; fell into my hands; and here she is. I can't give her a lung; but if I can get her to live on and enjoy life without one"

"It will be a miracle; though, really she seems, as it is, to enjoy life and its good things to admiration."

"Yes, yes; I see; the redness in her face. It brightens her eyes, and whitens her teeth: all disease, all symptomatic. You are going to drink the waters at Aix-la-Chapelle, I presume, Sir Frederick? But, if I might obtrude a travelling opinion, I should say, 'Try Baden.' Allow me: just turn your eyes to the light. Ay, I see; overworked,—that malady of minds, that 'o'erinform their tenement of clay.' So try Baden; but don't try the German physicians: German metaphysics, as much as you will. You have read Kant, of course—a floorer to the materialists. I admire Kant, as much as

that divine woman, Madame de Stael. I am for the spiritual, to the very verge of illusion."

Sir Frederick stifled a sigh.

"If you will allow me, I'll send you a little analysis of Kant's system, when we get to Brussels. You stop at Brussels?"

"Yes, merely to await my carriage."

"The only thing you will now find worth staying for there. The revolution is a regular humbug; but what can you expect from the '*canaux, canards, canailles*,' as Rousseau calls the *braves Belges*."

"I thought it had been Voltaire, who said it of the Dutch?"

"Oh, ay! — all the same, you know; the same population, all Dutch-land. I go by physiology. There is a link between man and the monkey; that is too curious! I speak as an anatomist! I don't mean as to the soul!

'The vital spark of heavenly flame!'

A noble line that, worthy of a Christian writer!
But Adrian, like Seneca, almost anticipated the moral of Revelation."

By this time the interlocutors had arrived in the town, and were traversing the *Place*

d'Armes, when the *chasseur* of the Princess of Schaffenhauseu came forth from a little book-shop. Doctor de Burgo looked earnestly after the man ; and Sir Frederick, whether he was desirous of getting rid of his intrusive companion, or really wanted to make some purchase, touched his hat, and entered the library.

After turning over several of the provoking but pleasant *contrafactions* of the Melini press, he asked for a Guide-book — “something—anything—he didn’t care what—about the country.” The man of the shop had nothing of the kind left. The immense flocks of English that had arrived by the last few packets had carried off all the Guides. He had sold the last of them to that English gentleman who was walking there with the *chasseur* of the Princess of Schaffenhauseu. She had just sent her *chasseur* to procure one; but he had it not to give him. It was unlucky, for the Princess started early the next morning : at least, so the *chasseur* thought.

Sir Frederick gave out that full and deep respiration which proceeds from the bosom which is suddenly relieved from some heavy weight. Still he continued to pore over the

books on the counter, till he lighted on a 'History of the Low Countries' by Mr. Grattan, and some other local works, which he bought and ordered to his hotel.

This he thought would be *pâturc* for the time which he should have to remain at Ostend; and after spending some additional time in wandering about the silent and empty streets of this once stirring and populous town, he returned, not to take 'his ease at his inn,' but to indulge in the solitude of its dreary and old-fashioned apartment.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BLESSE.

Among the many metaphysical refinements for which philosophy stands indebted to the Germans, there is none more luminous, and at the same time more sound, than their distinction between subjective and objective reality. The aspect of external nature borrows so much of its character, not only from the temperament and disposition, but from the caprices of feeling and passion, of the beholder, that the evidence of the senses scarcely suffices to convince us of the identity of certain objects, when revisited under a change of fortunes or of moods. It is thus that Paris may be rendered joyless and melancholy as its own Place de Grève; and that Ostend, of ill-omened notoriety for its monotony and dulness, may be-

come enjoyable to those to whom it proves an abrupt and refreshing transition.

In all the changes and chances of human life, there were few more striking and sudden than that which Sir Frederick Mottram had passed in arriving at the Belgian shores. The spoiled child of fortune, the 'English epicure,' the man made up of party views, local habits, and conventional principles, was now paying the penalty of his ignorance of all that constitutes the sad reality of a 'work-a-day world;' and was suffering some of the more painful consequences to which vice, folly, misfortune, or poverty, habitually expose the great mass of society's less favoured children. Flying from evils which had worn out his patience, he had fallen upon others which hitherto 'he knew not of;' and in escaping from the vexations and annoyances incidental to the highest positions in the social sphere, he tasted, though but for the moment, of those incidental almost to the lowest.

Deprived of conveniences which were to him a second nature, of luxuries which he deemed necessities; without money or credit; unknown, suspected, distrusted, he had escaped by a mere

accident from the ridicule of being sent back to England as a branded runaway, the victim of illiberal international laws which he had himself contributed to perpetuate: and for this escape he was indebted, in unredeemable obligation, to persons whose vulgarity shocked him, and whose probable future acquaintance might be troublesome, obtrusive, and ridiculous.

Still, (the greater embarrassments of his new position having been overcome,) it was not without its charm. To have merely escaped from the scenes of disquietude which he had fled,—to have exchanged the turmoil of political dissension and domestic jars for the solitude and tranquillity of Ostend,—would have done less to tranquillize his irritability, and restore the tone of his distempered mind, than this sudden plunge into pecuniary and personal difficulties, so new and so whimsical. His attention had been distracted: a new train of ideas had been forced upon him; he had been occupied, thrown upon the ways and means of chance; the past had been violently and abruptly dissociated from the present; and under this revulsion of ideas and habits, the old

Flemish and once prosperous sea-port afforded objects of curiosity and interest, that gradually seized upon his imagination, and rendered him even cheerfully submissive to a species of exile and detention, to which so many English voluptuaries are condemned, in the small retired towns of the French and Flemish coasts.

The ascertainment of his rank and fortune, in procuring him that attention and credit which are never refused to the possessors of such distinctions, left few recollections of the recent misadventure beyond those which belonged to its whimsicality and exciting novelty. The energy of his intellect, too, was something restored by the rallying of his bodily health ; and in giving himself up to his new situation, and exploring the resources of the place, he had stumbled upon one of those obscure, neglected curiosity shops, so frequent in the Flemish towns, where he purchased some old chronicles relating to the early history of the Low Countries, which, smelling of the *terrain*, awakened a new and deep interest for its stormy story.

While waiting for letters from England, he had nothing to do but to read and write ; and he

did both on the sea-shore, enjoying the breath and beams of heaven to a luxurious excess. He almost constantly occupied the *Pavillon des Bains*, and was occasionally amused at the novel combinations that *local* afforded.

It was under feelings so new (though not unconnected with the earliest associations of his life), that he resumed his correspondence with Horace Harvey, between whom and himself, though the world had rushed, nature had woven links never to be wholly dissevered. The same intellectual temperaments, differently directed ; the same sensibility to all that is beautiful in nature and in art, prevailing in both, had produced, between the moderate tory and the epicurean liberal, a sympathy in sentiment and taste, which no divergence of political or abstract opinions could diminish, or wholly interrupt. In the existing isolation of his heart and circumstances, the desire to communicate the impressions he was receiving, and to seek for sympathy in his new views, was becoming almost a physical want ; and the necessity of disposing of a certain quantity of surplus leisure, not improbably improved this feeling into an impulse.

to again address his friend, after the lapse of four days from his previous letter.

“ TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ.

“ Pavillon des Bains, Ostend.

“ DEAR HORACE,—I write principally to relieve you from the apprehension of my being taken up for a vagabond, and sent back to England. Well ! I am restored to the ranks of the honest and the trust-worthy, owing to the interference of the Irish family I mentioned in my last. Such originals ! and yet persons of rank, wealth, and boundless hospitality. From their own showing, at least, they have received half the aristocracy of England at their old castle, somewhere on the road to Killarney. Imagine their having expended fifteen hundred pounds on wine in one year, when they entertained the Lord Lieutenant of the time being ! The old Milesian is vulgar to the extreme verge of Irish vulgarity. His lady, all pretension and *bleu* ; and then the travelling physician, who is Irish too ! He, however, puzzles me. He is obtrusive, familiar, and of true Irish assurance ; but he is a devilish clever fellow, very amusing,

and extremely quick in his professional views. In a short walk, he threw out some very odd observations ; and made a better guess at my disease, than any of the big-wigs I consulted in London.

“ I was very near having the honour of the whole party’s society ; but that they have joined the travelling suite, of —— who, for a ducat ? Why, my *bête noire*, the Princess of Schaffhausen.

“ On the evening of my arrival here, as I sat on the ramparts *enclavé* between Sir Ignatius and my lady, the identical Princess passed us, veiled and muffled as usual, and pointing her impertinent glass full upon us.

“ Can you imagine the absurd coincidence of our sailing in the same packet ! Her apparition at my house in London had been among the causes of drawing me from it ; and here she is, or rather was ; since she left Ostend the next morning, with the Dogherties in her train. What an inexplicable creature ! what energies ! what physical as well as moral force ! There are traits in her character, or rather her conduct, which sometimes remind me of Christine of Sweden—a great

creature, though a perverted one ! But what is her object— what her pursuit ? Yet, of what consequence is this to me ? Her association with such creatures as the Dogherties, however, is very amusing.

“ I have had a note from the Doctor, by the bye, to apologize for not offering me a seat in their carriage to Brussels. ‘ We have been suddenly induced to join the party of her Highness the Princess of Schaffenhauseu, and start early to-morrow, he says ; ‘ but we shall be happy to renew our acquaintance, and receive the honour of your commands at the ‘ Hôtel de Bellevue ; &c. &c.’

“ So I am *quitte pour la peur*. What a people these Irish are ! While I was writing the last line, I overheard a fine-looking fellow, standing at the door of the Pavillon, say to a pretty Flemish fruit-girl, ‘ *Vous êtes belle, Ma’m’selle,*’—‘ *Non, Monsieur, je ne suis que jolie !*’ was the reply. But the compliment was so often repeated, that I rose to see who was the pertinacious cavalier. To my infinite surprise, I discovered it to be Lawrence Fegan, my Irish *Jocrisse*, whose blunders have

plunged me into so many difficulties, from which I am not yet quite extricated.

“His actual appearance, compared with the impression he had made upon me at Carlton-terrace, set identity at defiance. He had availed himself of the order I had given for a suit of livery, to banish all that was tigrish in his groom’s frock ; and the first French tailor of Ostend has produced a dress on the dandy model of the Doctor’s *défroque*, so that little more than the colour of my livery remained.

“To my exclamation of ‘Fegan, is that you?’ he answered, with a flourishing Flemish bow, ‘It is, of coorse, Sir Frederick.’ He coloured deeply as I threw my eye over his clothes, and added, ‘I ax your pardon, sir ; if my new coat isn’t entirely of the livery cut, it is the fault of Mounseer the *tailleur*. And in regard of being your honor’s own groom and vally, I have sworn upon the holy and blessed altar of the *église* of Nother Dame, not to let a drop of naked spirits pass my lips till I get back to Ireland, be that same short or long : and am after endeavouring to pick up a word of Frinch, to make myself useful, by buying strawberries from the

young Ma'm'selles of the pleece, and reading the signs over the shop-doors, sir.' I give you this speech verbatim; but his look and accent are beyond the reach of art.

"All this time the fair *vrouw* stood smiling and curtsying; while Fegan, with the strawberries in one hand and his hat in the other, was really not at all unlike his patron the Doctor. His quickness, improvability, and humour, have vanquished me! I ordered him to pay the young woman for her fruit; and left him counting out the change for a franc, and murmuring his '*Vous êtes belle*'; which, I suspect, constitutes the whole of his present vocabulary. He appears to be honest, willing, alert, and an excellent groom; and though I shall probably want but little of his services in that capacity, I shall bear with him, and pick up at Brussels something between a courier and a valet, to complete my travelling suite.

"But whither am I to travel? I dare not yet turn my thoughts towards Carlton-terrace; and '*de die in diem*' must be my motto until some motive starts up to steer or fix me. Meantime, I read and saunter away my time, in your

own *pocourante* way ; and have already made an acquaintance with some of the natives that rather interests me in the Belgian Revolution : hitherto, I confess, the object of my indifference, at the least. I had been more than disgusted by its drawling and unsatisfactory details of inconclusive negotiations ; having watched its progress and protocols, through the spectacles of the Holy Alliance, and under some certain social prejudices, for which, perhaps, our London coteries are answerable.

“ One of my approaches to the ramparts (where I actually live) is by a rope-walk, where an old *maître fabriquant de cordage* presents such a perfect figure of one of Tenier’s *drôles*, that I bought some pencils and drawing-card for the purpose of sketching him; (the first time I have taken up a pencil, by the bye, for eight years.) He saw what I was about, and lest he should be offended, I scratched in a bit of a ruined building, and asked him the name of the place. He looked at it, and sighed. ‘ Ah, Seigneur Dieu ! ’ he observed in excellent French, ‘ there is nothing now in this town worth making a picture of—it is a ruin. Some

thirty years ago, there were still some fine things to be seen in it ; but the *blocus continental* of the Emperor Napoleon gave the *coup de grace* to the prosperity of Ostend ; and then, to make bad worse, we were given over to the king of the Dutch ; and it was his cursed Dutch gunpowder that exploded in 1826, and completed our misfortunes. The government magazine, to be sure, went up along with it ; that was some comfort ; but the town was nearly reduced to ruins. The earthquake was felt at Brussels. The explosion took its course along the shore. The *Haze-gras*, the finest *place* in Flanders, became a heap of rubbish ; and had not Notre Dame d'Ostende watched over us, our ancient city would have been the tomb of its inhabitants.'

" '*Apparemment,*' I said, as we walked on together towards the ramparts, '*monsieur n'est pas Orangiste ?*'

" '*Comment, monsieur !*' he replied, '*je suis Belge, moi,—Saquer !*'*

" At that moment we overtook a young man, with death stamped on his pale but handsome

* The Flemish pronunciation of *sacre*.

face. He was leaning on the arm of a young girl dressed in the Flemish costume, and was supported by a crutch. He wore a blue linen blouse, with red worsted epaulettes; and his little casquet was ornamented with the Belgian tri-coloured cockade (red, yellow, and black), worn with something of a military smartness.

“‘It is one of our *Blessés*,’ said the old man, taking off his cap, and saluting him respectfully. *Bonjour, mon brave! comment va la santé?*’

“‘*Pas mal*,’ said the young man, with a faint smile, as he seated himself on a stone bench.

“The girl opened a little basket, presented him some biscuits and fruit, and laid a flask of wine and a horn cup beside him. After a short dialogue in Flemish, animated by a smile which could not be mistaken, she kissed her hand and turned away. I took my place beside the poor invalid, whose appearance affected me. I made some idle remarks on the sea air, and its salubrity to an invalid.

“‘*C’est un de nos Blessés*,’ repeated the old man, folding his arms upon his breast, and looking with pride on the young sufferer. ‘He is

a hero of the 26th of September, our great and glorious revolution.'

" 'Did the revolution of Brussels reach to Ostend?' I asked.

" 'Reach it!' repeated the old man indignantly: '*par exemple!* we did not wait for that; we met it more than half-way—*n'est-ce pas, mon brave?*'

" '*Je crois bien!*' said the *Blessé*, either restored by the wine he had supped, or kindling at recollections which had their influence over his life—nay, his death! for his hectic cheek and flashing eye spoke of rapid dissolution.

" '*He* can tell you something of our revolution, sir,' said the old man. 'You English gentlemen believe nothing, know nothing about us. I have talked to many of them on the ramparts, and they were all alike ignorant on the subject. *Eh, mon Dieu!* that poor lad there, who was *mitraillé* by the Dutch, was the first to plant the Belgian flag on our town. He can tell you better than I, whether we had a taste of the revolution of Brussels, or no.'

" I felt that I had shocked the self-love of the patriotism of Ostend, and hastened to acknowledge my ignorance and to desire information.

The young patriot seemed flattered, and proud of the reference. After a little hesitation, a clearing of the voice, and a summing up of spirits, he almost burst forth,

“ ‘The cry of liberty, monsieur, had resounded through Belgium. It found no tardy echo in Flanders; for if *nous autres Flamands* are less explosive than the brave *Liegeois*, we were not less sensible of our grievances. Our hatred of the Dutch was of long date. We had already had our political revolts, and blood had been spilt; the people of Ostend and its arrondissements having been irritated by the conduct of the Dutch *commandant de place*.

“ ‘*Bien, monsieur*; it was on the evening of the 26th of September, about six o'clock, (*I ought to remember it, Monsieur Ernest, for I had come to make preparations for my marriage,*) that the firing from Bruges was heard at Ostend. The people rose instantly; ill-armed indeed, but with the Belgian colours at their head, and with the brave *Jean de Bataille*, an ex-officer of marine, to lead them. We directed our steps to the *Grande Place*, and the guard was disarmed in a moment. The troops flew to retake

the post ; a *feu de peloton* killed nine of our bourgeois ; and I had the honour to receive wounds, of which I am yet not quite cured !

“ ‘ On the 27th, the troops of Bruges retreated on Ostend ; and on the 28th, the popular movement recommenced, with more violence than ever. It was then that the Belgian soldiers separated from the Dutch, and joined the bourgeois. On the 30th, the troops capitulated ; and surrendering the town to the Belgian military and the town-folk, sailed on the same day for Flushing.

“ ‘ Our example,’ continued the young *Blessé*, ‘ was not followed, but met by the towns of the neighbourhood. Each made its own little revolution. Furnes, Nieuport, Ypres, Dixmude, Courtrai, and the major part of the communes of the *plat pays*, had scarcely more than to disarm the *maréchaussée* ; and by the 3rd of October, in the space of eight days, the Belgian flag floated on the belfries of all our villages, to the very verge of Flanders. *C’était une belle révolution que la nôtre !*’

“ Nothing could be more animating than the countenance of the old man during this detail ;

and his '*Voilà !*' '*Pardie !*' '*Je le crois bien !*' '*Voyez donc, monsieur !*' formed an amusing running commentary upon the text. We were still at our '*belle révolution*' when the pretty *fiancée* returned, for she was evidently the bride of the interrupted espousals. She reproved the *Blessé* for having talked too much, and drew him away; but not before I had apologized for a curiosity which might prove injurious to him, and obtained and taken down his address. — The young man slowly crawled away, supported by his mistress.

"The old rope-maker sighed, as he followed them, with eyes full of compassion.

" "She will soon be spared this trouble, *pauvre petite !*" he said. "Every time I see him, *Jean* is a step nearer to his grave!"

"She is of course his mistress?" I said.

" "She was his *fiancée*, monsieur; and was to have been married, when the revolution broke out. *Jean* was a poor lad, but of respectable parentage, and one of the best workmen in the hat-manufactory at Thourout. *Marie* is the daughter of a *garde-champêtre*. His cottage stands in the forest of Wynendale. She was

sent here to learn to make lace ; and everything was settled for the nuptials, when the 26th of September arrived. He has told you the rest except that her father is an Orangeist, and will not now hear of their union.

“ It is astonishing how much this little romance has interested me. I intend to look to these poor people, and try whether better medical advice cannot be procured to save the young patriot from his impending fate.

“ That *I* should become interested in the Belgian revolution, and at Ostend !—a partisan, too, on the wrong side ! But the animated narrative of the unfortunate Jean, his youthful mistress, and her Orange father, have worked on my imagination ; and this domestic episode has really excited a feeling concerning the political drama itself, not quite consonant with my habitual views of the subject. It is strange how a phrase—a word giving a tint, a colour, to events—operates this species of enchantment on the coolest auditors. The forest of Wynendale ! Ypres, Courtrai, names associated with the glorious wars of our own revolution. Even the ‘*nous autres Flamands*’ of honest Jean identifying

the speaker with a national sentiment, wins one for a moment to an affection for his cause, and a belief in the possible permanency of its success, at variance with all preconceived opinion.

“Modern story makes but little part of our school and university education ; and though one reads afterwards to a particular point, still there are few Englishmen sufficiently acquainted with the history of these countries, to feel their enthusiasm kindle at aught that concerns the present destinies of its people. Sometimes indeed, when one has ‘to rise’ upon a question of Lord Palmerston’s protocols, or the treaty of 1815, and has to get up a hit for the debate, one sends to Murray for the newest and shortest book on the matter ; but, the purpose served, the facts are forgotten.

“Since my arrival here I have been reading an old black-letter chronicle of the Low Countries, called *La Chronique de Nangis*, which I picked up here, and which, as well as Meyer’s history of Flanders, has all the interest of a romance. To that circumstance, probably, the story of the young *Blessé* is indebted for a portion of the seduction it has exercised on me. You

must first warm to a people by their antecedents, before you can interest yourself for their actual position."

"P. S.—The packet is in. A letter from Harris's head clerk incloses me the sum I wrote for; but he waits the return of his *chef* from Mottram Hall, to proceed with the rest of my commission, instead of sending me my letter of credit at once. This is pleasant; for I have already expended a good part of the money he has sent me. Was there ever such an accumulation of bores!. The *exigente* Princess, moreover, has carried off all the post-horses left by the travelling hordes of English; so I start by the *treckschuyt* at two o'clock, where I shall be huddled in with other specimens of the animal creation, male and female, as in Noah's ark. But, at this moment, I really am so steeped in 'tender sympathies' for others, that my own annoyances sit lightly on me.

"I went an hour ago to see my poor *Blessé*. I found his humble dwelling in the upper story of an old edifice which probably escaped the siege by Spinola; for nothing was ever so antique or dilapidated.

“The chamber, No. 3, *au second*, was easily found: no door was closed against the intruder. As I approached, a figure in black, who appeared just to have left the apartment, drew up in the narrow passage to let me pass. I think it was a female; but the picture within occupied all my attention. On a sort of truckle bed lay the extenuated form of poor Jean. The few hours which had elapsed since we parted had made great ravages, and he was in the very agony of death, though scarcely paler than I had seen him the day before. His little cap with its tri-coloured cockade was placed beside him; and a priest was praying before a temporary altar at the head of the bed. Poor *Marie*, half prostrate on the floor, knelt, with her face buried in the counterpane; while the bluff old rope-maker knelt too, and was in the act of prayer. He caught a glimpse, however, of my figure as I receded from the door, unwilling to disturb the solemn scene; and he followed me out. I had my purse in my hand; and as if in reply to my presumed intention, he said,

“ ‘ You are very kind, monsieur; but a good religious woman, *une bonne et charitable dévôte*,

has already provided for the wants of the invalid. But poor Jean has now no more wants !’

“ And Marie ?’ I said.

“ ‘ Marie has her parents and her own industry to support her ; and though from a compatriot and a *bonne Belge* there is no degradation in the *Blessés* receiving assistance, yet from a stranger and the native of another land it is different. I thank you, however, in behalf of my countryman for your kindly intention—*vous êtes un brave monsieur !*—and he shook my hand rather roughly.

“ Mine host of the hotel has come for my English letters, to renew his apologies for having taken me for a suspicious character, and to announce the departure of the *treck-schuyt*.

“ Let me hear from you at Brussels ; and so farewell.

“ F. M.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRECKSCHUYT.

ON board the *treckschuyt* which pursues its daily voyage between Ostend and Bruges, was assembled one of those travelling congresses of European nations, which are to be found in every public vehicle supplied by enterprise to the itinerant wants of the most itinerant generation that the world has yet produced. Sir Frederick Mottram, accustomed to select his own hours for travelling, and to make 'panting time toil' after *him*, was now panting to overtake time, and was all but too late for the punctuality of the Flemish boat. Lawrence Fegan however had preceded his master, and was standing, Colossus-like, with 'one foot at sea and t' other on shore,' and swearing in good round Irish at the *conducteur*, for presuming to cast off 'the canal-boat,' or let the driver mount 'the garan,' before the arrival of Sir Frederick,

whose rank and titles he announced with a pomposity by no means borne out by the two carpet-bags which contained their united baggage.

Every English eye was turned upon the 'Right Honourable,' as he stepped in. The fuss that was made by Fegan excited amusement in some, and curiosity in all. Shy, near-sighted, and preoccupied, Sir Frederick stumbled into a seat on the first bench that presented itself; and putting up his glass, perceived that there was on board but one English carriage, and a small, dark, foreign calash, without arms. A group of Englishmen, collected at one end of the boat, had all directed their eyes to him; and a party of genuine Flemish figures in the other were making observations in their native dialect, of which he was painfully conscious that he was the object.

Equally irritated by the obvious absurdity of Fegan's flourishing manner, and by his own impatience, in not waiting another day at Ostend, when no princely demand on its posting capabilities would have interfered with his own wishes of travelling in the indulgence of complete privacy; his first impulse was to take

up a book which lay beside him, and, by burying himself in its pages, to escape farther observation. The seat which he occupied had been recently left by a female wrapped in the all-involving black cloak and hood of Flemish costume, so prevalent even to the gates of Brussels. Perceiving her place and book in the possession of the embarrassed stranger, she courteously left them at his discretion; and joining a female companion, (as muffled as herself,) at the farther end of the boat, she entered into conversation with a young Italian exile, who was on his way to that asylum of the expatriated worth of all nations, the capital of Belgium.

The book thus abandoned was the '*Prigioni*' of Silvio Pellico; and in the fly-leaf was written, in pencil, the following apostrophe, the probable effusion of expatriated sympathy, for sufferings recounted with deeper pathos than the Lament of Tasso, if not with all the bitter spirit of the indignant Dante. It caught the eye and interested the attention of Sir Frederick:—

“Italy! magnificent Italy! region of splendid creations, where Nature reigns preeminent

in the midst of her sublimity and her loveliness—where Art, by the supremacy of genius, moves proudly in her track, reproducing her forms, embodying her inspirations ! Italy ! with all your physical attributes, with all your historical recollections, why is it that a veil of sadness, like a film of crape, hangs for ever on your beauty ? Why does insecurity press upon the heart of the stranger who comes to worship on your shores ? Why, in referring to days passed in your elysian vales among your mighty monuments, is your name still breathed with sighs, still uttered with a tear ?

“ It is, that, buried in their living tombs, lie incarcerated the flower of your sons ; that your blue skies brighten not their dungeons ; that your balmy airs bring no health to their withered breasts ! It is, that Despotism and Bigotry stand watchful and suspicious to note the look, record the word, and denounce the spirit, that breathes of their iniquities : it is, that in Italy there is no personal security ; that images of fraud and violence multiply on every side ; that cells again open for their dupes, and scaffolds rise for their victims !

Nations of Europe, which of you have done this?—England! free England! You, who open charitable bazaars for distressed foreigners, from which you exclude the Italian exile and the Polish refugee!—France! revolutionizing, but not yet revolutionized France”.

The fragment here broke off. Pellico, whose book now for the first time fell into the hands of Sir Frederick (for party in England reads only its own literature)—Pellico was his old acquaintance. He had known him in Milan in 1820, in the house of his illustrious friend Count Porro. Both Pellico and himself were, then, in the prime of early youth. Frederick Mottram, not yet of age, was returning by the north of Italy from his diplomatic residence in the English embassy at Vienna; and he had joined a ‘harlequin set’ of Whig and Tory exclusives, the future autocrats of Crockford’s and queens of Almack’s, who then nightly congregated in the Scala, and lounged daily on the Corso, in the splendid capital of Lombardy. Such as they were, ‘a mingled web of good and ill together,’ they had, in the previous year, received into their magic circle of London

fashion, a flush of young Italian nobles, of the liberal sect, and bred in the scientific schools of the iron-crowned King of Italy, on whom they bestowed all that attention which rank and wealth never fail to obtain from English society. Never did Italy send forth more splendid specimens of her superior population, than in the persons of the young Counts Confalonieri, Capponi, Velo, and others, whose historical names recall the great days of Italian grandeur and independence. In gratitude for this reception into the 'world of English ton,' then all-powerful, the noblesse of Milan, the most enlightened of Italy, opened their marble palaces, their villas, their galleries, and their opera-boxes, to their English friends and quondam hosts.

Amongst those who best did the honours of Lombardy, were the Counts Confalonieri and Porro; and it was in a garden-room belonging to the classical *Casa Porro*, that Frederick Mottram, the young English Tory of London, the Italian Liberal of Milan, was wont to seek the author of 'Francisca da Rimini,' the editor of the 'Conciliatore,' the most accom-

plished and inspired of modern Italian poets. The two young men were united by the common sympathy of taste, passion, and gentle natures. Frederick Mottram stood indebted to Pellico for his first taste for Italian literature; and when he was recalled by his ambitious father to represent a rotten borough, on his reaching majority, and to marry the daughter of a pauper duke, he had proposed to his Italian friend that he should accompany him to the land of freedom; for so he called the England of the Holy Alliance.

Unfortunately, Pellico conceived that he had sacred duties to perform by his own country, which prevented his visiting other lands; and he deferred the promised visit till—Italy should be free! From that moment when, hand clasped in hand, they stood at the edge of the gondola on the banks of the Lake of Comø, whence Sir F. Mottram had taken his departure from Italy, thirteen years had elapsed.

In the eventful interval, Pellico had, like so many other of his countrymen, passed the golden prime of his youth in an Austrian dungeon. And how had the British statesman

passed that interval, so big with misery to millions? As a private man, he had passed it in all the 'pomp and circumstance,' in all the ease and luxury, of English aristocratic habits; as a public man, in riveting the chains and deepening the dungeon of his Italian friends, by truckling to foreign despotism, and guarding the avenues of domestic abuse from the innovations of timely, temperate, inevitable reform.

It was in the *treckschuyt* of Ostend that this idea flashed on his imagination for the first time. He closed the book, and laying it down beside him, gave himself up to deep thoughts and sad recollections. He had passed his hand over his eyes, and his ears were shut to the jargon of many tongues which was uttering around him, when he was aroused from his reverie, the most profound and novel he had ever indulged in, by somebody plumping down on the seat beside him.

"Beg pardon, sir," said a rough cockney voice, "but a seat is a seat here: crowded as a Margate hoy on a Saturday. Pretty flattish country this here, sir; just like the Hesse coast. Howsomdever, anything's better than Hostend! I paid as much for a pint of port-

wine there as you 'd get a bottle of mideirer for in Lonnon. Porter, too, a shilling a bottle ! pretty himposition ! A poor place that Hostend as ever I see in my voyage through life ;— nothing to Ramsgate, though I can't bring my younkers there to think so."

He pointed to a flashy girl and gawky boy who were seated together on an opposite bench. The former was dressed after 'Ackermann's Fashions for May,' and sat sentimentally, with a book open in her hand ; the latter was emptying a large cabbage-leaf of its load of currants, with which he had smeared his lubberly face, while a cargo of Ostend gingerbread peeped from his coat-pocket.

"La ! pa, you are so prejudiced," said the young lady, her eyes fully directed to the figure of the Englishman of fashion ; for such she had pronounced him to her brother, who had answered to the remark — "What 's that to me ?"

"Margate," she continued, "is becoming so shocking vulgar, and there is something so very foreign in Hostend ! Pray, sir," addressing Sir Frederick, "how far may it be from Hostend to *Haix-la-Chapelle* ?"

"As far as from the first of Haugust to the foot of Westminster-bridge," said the father. "Why, what does it signify, Susan? I tell you I von't stop at that there place, by no means. I don't mean to stop no where till I leave Bill at school at Idleburgh. Are you going as far as Idleburgh, sir?"

"No, sir," said Sir Frederick, measuring the interlocutor with the look of one unused to such coarse contact.

"Well, sir, by all accounts, you might do worser. I am a-going to put this here tall boy to school there; where he will be hedicated, fed, and clothed for two years, for less than I pay for six months at Charter-house for my son James. But James is the heldest; and his mother will have him sent to college, and made a gentleman of, and a lawyer. This here boy is a-going into a great Hinglish brewery at Lige, as is kept by a cousin of mine; and he, you see, must get a *parlez-vous* hedication and learn Jarman; and so he is going to Idleburgh."

"The young gentleman," said Sir Frederick, insensibly amused, "will, I dare say, have no objection."

“Not he, sir. All he wants is plenty to heat and drink, and time to play. My nevy, sir, Tom Tyler—my name is Tyler, sir; you may have heard of our house, the Tylers of Milk-street, well known in the city: an old house now! ——”

“Very,” said Sir Frederick, irresistibly smiling, “and one not unknown to history. I take it for granted you are a descendant from Wat Tyler?”

“No, sir, no! My father’s name, sir, was Job; I’m not ashamed to own it, sir: the first of our family. He began life an errand-boy to a draper in Holburn, and died head of the business. I am proud on’t; though I dare say, sir, you know some would be ashamed to own their father was poor and industrious, and worked up their way in the world!”—Sir Frederick felt his blood mount to his face, and threw round a furtive glance at the English passengers.

“Well, sir, as I was saying, my nevy, who is rider to Mr. Cockrell at Lige, (I mean to stop a day at the iron-works as we comes back; but business fust, you know,)—my nevy wrote to me about a famous spa; and it’s by

Tom's advice that I'm a-going to look arter an highland in the Rhine, sir, the highland of Nun's Wart, which I have some idear of purchasing."

"Nonnenswerth, pa," interrupted the young lady.

"Tom," continued Mr. Tyler, "recommends us to buy up the whole highland, and make a sort of a Beulah Spa of it;—great speculation, that. Hire a gipsy in Norwood, if there a'nt none in these here foreign parts; but them chaps are everywhere—vagrants, sir, vagrants. Still, sir, the public must be served, as my father used to say of blue printed linens, when the bird's eye pattern came into fashion. A bad harticle, my father used to say; but the public must be served in its own way. Now, sir, gipsies are bad harticles; but as I hear 'tis the Hinglish chiefly frequents the river Rhine, set in case I likes the thing, and completes the speculation, they shall have a gipsy and asses in plenty to suit their tastes."

"And what may be the object of your speculation? you are going a great way for it," said Sir Frederick, beginning to enjoy Mr. Tyler's communicativeness.

“ Why, sir, you see, money ’s a drug now-a-days. One can get ten thousand in the city now easier than our fathers could borrow a guinea ; and seeing that all our advertising papers are full of the Rhine, and that all our folk in the city are beginning to give up Margate for the Rhine, I writes to my nevy, he being in foreign parts, to find out what might be done there ; and so, sir, he recommends me to come and look arter this highland of Nunsworth, where there is a sort of a Hinglish hotel or board-ouse already. Besides, my nevy says, we may have a box of our hown on the highland, for half what my wife pays for a lodging for three weeks at Brighton when the royal family’s there ; and get from Lonnon more cheap and in half the time we goes to Arrowgate. Well, I wish we were at—what d’ye call the highland, Susan ; for I’m sick of travelling already.”

“ The island of Nonnenswerth, pa—a most beautiful and romantic spot,” recited Miss Susan, turning to Sir Frederick. “ It is the subject of a sweet poem in a forthcoming work, as the journal of Ton says.”

“ Sweet my eye,” said Mr. Tyler, winking at Sir Frederick. “ Poems ! nonsense ! Get

a doctor to puff it for the wholesomes ; and that will fill the boarding-ouse, and get you a smart husband, mayhap ; and then, I suppose, I must come down ‘ with a slice of our own little highland.’ ”

“ The island of Nonnenswerth,” continued Miss Tyler, addressing Sir Frederick, and blushing at her father’s vulgarity, “ is sitivated in the midst of the Rhine, close to the castle of Rolandseck. It was built by Roland the nephew of Charlemagne, to be near his beautiful mistress, who was a nun in a convent in the island which pa is about to purchase.”

“ Ay, ay ! never mind that : we’ll give ’em a Roland for their Oliver, and bring over a Lonnon harchitect to build the spa-ouse after the pattern of Beulah. A Hinglish hotel is worth all the old papist nunneries in Christendom ! I hate the papists, sir—that’s the truth on’t ; would like to hexterminate them root and branch from the face of the world. See what the’ve been a-doing in Hireland ! Why, sir, one of the reasons why I wouldn’t vote for Obhouse, (though the family deals at our ouse,) is because he was a catholic hemancipator.”

During this confidential dialogue, Sir Frederick's attention had turned to a little band of musicians, consisting of a harp, violin, and violoncello, which usually accompanies the boat ; and Miss Susan Tyler, with more observation than her father, perceiving the circumstance, abruptly changed the conversation.

"What a charming hoperer we have had this season, sir ! You admire Italian music, I perceive. Do you remember Paster and Rubini in that charming duet '*Mabbracciar Argyrior?*'"

"It's all humbug !" said the father. "Costs the nation a power, and ruins the morals of our wives and darters. Nobody in the city went to hoperers in my young days ! Never was there in my life, — rather hear Hirish Johnson, or Charley Dignum, poor fellows ! than all the Squalinis in the world. Charley always sung '*Blow, blow, thou winter's wind,*' when his own night was a-coming, because there was summat in it about '*benefits forgot,*' ha ! ha ! ha ! Droll chap that ! always took tickets and a front row in the second boxes for his benefit ; always sung his best song for our Company dinners."

"La ! pa, how you do talk ! There was

never no English music worth earing, except Miss Paton as was, in 'Hartaxerxes.' Did you ever ear Miss Paton sing '*Fly, soft hidears, fly*'?"

Sir Frederick, with an irrepressible smile, answered in the negative; and amused up to the point of possible amusability, in his actual state of temper, by the demonstrative communications of these stranger 'Pilgrims of the Rhine,' he left the daughter and father disputing on the respective merits of Charley Dignum and Miss Paton, and went forward to listen to the pleasant music of the little band, which recalled, in the airs they performed, some impressions of his early boyish travels.

The woman was singing with more taste than science, to the accompaniment of her harp, the French melody '*Loin du chalet*.' The Italian exile was murmuring a *sotto voce* second, and repeated with much energy the refrain '*Oh ma patrie*.' The cloaked and hooded *Flamande* was drawing, on a card which rested on the volume of Pellico's '*Prigioni*;' and her companion was talking to Fegan in broken English. The group was picturesque, from the contrasted

variety of the figures, faces, and costumes that composed it.

Meantime, the swampy banks of the canal near Ostend had been gradually exchanged for scenes of more broken and woody outline ; the country rising into highly cultivated ridges on either side. As Bruges was approached, rural prosperity and beauty became more striking. Snug cottages and substantial farm-houses, deeply coloured, as in a Dutch picture, peeped through trees, and presented images of comfort and ease which, throughout even this, the flattest part of Belgium, amply compensate for the absence of the more striking features of mountain countries. On some spots the hay was still making, and sent forth its perfume on the air ; and wherever man appeared, his fresh colour and decent garb betokened the full suppliance of the first wants of life.

A little further on, the *treckschuyt* drew up for a moment near a garden gate of an extremely neat *campagne*, and took in two gentlemen. They swept the decks with their hats ; and their low bows were returned by salutes from the Flemish party in the boat with equal

courtesy. One of the strangers took his place with his face turned towards the town, and his hat drawn down to shelter him from the oblique rays of the sun: he was of the middle age, Flemish-built, full and comely. His companion was a young man of a lively and interesting appearance, and might have belonged to any country. Their conversation was carried on in French, which, by its context, revealed that they were evidently inhabitants of Bruges or its neighbourhood, and were returning at that early hour from a dinner-party, at the villa of a friend, to the town.

There was something in all this, that recalled the social habits and rational hours of the middle classes of England of older times, almost refreshing to one *blasé* by the enfeebling and corrupting usages of his own class and day; and Sir Frederick, after an effort in his own shyness and reserve, was tempted to seek an opening to intercourse by asking the period at which the canal from Bruges to Ostend had been cut. The two Flemish gentlemen turned round, and, bowing as Flemings only bow, seemed eager to reply.

"It was constructed," said the elder of the two, "in 1613, and is a little monument of what even a transient peace of twelve years can effect,—a pause during that sanguinary period of European history, in the seventeenth century. You remember, doubtless, sir, the truce so long desired between Holland, Spain, England, and France?"

Sir Frederick nodded an equivocal assent, and endeavoured to 'rub up' his recent readings.

"Yes," said the young man; "it was a *trêve de Dieu*, to give the despots of Europe time to breathe, and think of new modes of oppression and violence. A pretty set they were! Your James the First, monsieur, false to his allies, like a true Stuart! Louis the Thirteenth, or rather his minister Richelieu; Maurice of Nassau, who was mystifying the Dutch, and planning the murder of that glorious patriot Olden Barneveldt; and Philip the Third, of Spain, the worthy successor of the monster Philip the Second, who then ruled over the blood-steeped and smoking ruins of Flanders and Brabant, in the person of his viceroys, the Archdukes (as they were called)

Albert and Isabella ; — glorious times those ! ”

A murmur of assent followed this speech.

“ It was a great epoch for us,” said the elder gentleman. “ We were handed over, to be sure, from bloody Spain to leaden Austria : but Albert and Isabella were like the princes of fairy tales, ‘ *de bons princes* ; ’ so we began to labour in this pause of peace in repairing the ravages of war : agriculture revived, roads were opened, canals were constructed ; and though our ancient city of Bruges had then no court, and had lost the early splendour of her commerce, still the minor operations of trade renewed their activity ; and the reviving prosperity of the country is yet visible in many monuments of utility and civilization.”

“ *Eh bien, monsieur,*” said the younger patriot, “ I trust the five great powers of the present day will let us breathe a little now, and give us time to recover. Nations are always for peace when left to themselves ; but kings, and those who minister to kings, seldom leave them the choice.”

Sir Frederick, interested in the conversation, observed, “ I believe England concurs fully in

the wish for peace. All parties with us agree, that it is the interest of Europe to maintain it."

"To be sure," observed the young and animated Fleming. "Look around you, sir; look at those lovely orchards and beautiful gardens; they are the work of persevering Flemish industry, raised on artificial soils! It would be a pity to see the labour of years ravaged by war, *n'est-ce pas, monsieur?* Yet, sooner than forfeit our national independence, which we have so hardly conquered, we are ready to fight the battle over again to-morrow."

"*Jour de Dieu!*" said another Flemish gentleman, "you are quite right! If we are to be free, we must be prepared for the cost; for right is too often with the strongest. *Le bon Dieu est toujours pour les gros bataillons*, as Spain and Austria found in our unfortunate country, in other times."

The setting sun now fell in showers of gold on the Gothic towers of Bruges, and were reflected in bright points from their golden fanes and moulded casements.

"What a splendid picture!" said Sir Frederick.

"Yes," said the elder of the two last arrivals; "it is well calculated to make an impression on those who are not, like myself, deprived of the organs of vision."

Sir Frederick started; and looking under the broad hat of the last speaker, perceived that he was indeed deprived of sight.

"That high belfry," continued the blind gentleman, "is the *clocher de Notre Dame de Bruges*, one of the loftiest in Flanders. We see it at sea, and it directs the vessels into the port of Ostend."

"The view is indeed splendid," said Sir Frederick Mottram; "but one always fears that the illusion will be dissipated, on entering these ancient towns. It generally is so in Italy, where the towns are perfect disappointments."

"Those of Flanders are the reverse," said the young Brugeois: "the domestic architecture of the middle ages in the Netherlands is the most perfect and picturesque of Europe. Flanders was the cradle of the arts; but though our national rulers, our *Comtes Grands Forestiers* and Dukes of Burgundy, were magnificent pa-

trons, it was the merchants and tradesmen of Bruges who raised those beautiful edifices which, if you have any taste for such pursuits, you will be delighted to examine."

"The arts are almost the only subject that interests me very much," said Sir Frederick, with some emphasis.

"*Monsieur est-il artiste de profession ?*" said the black-hooded lady, putting the card on which she had been drawing into her book.

"Only an amateur, madam," he replied, a little hurt at being taken for anything professional.

"*Eh bien,*" she continued ; "look before you ! There is one of those originals from which our Flemish painters might have taken their subject. There is the *chiaro oscuro* of Hobbima, in which he equals Ruysdael. There are his deep masses ; and there his setting sun, in which he rivalled Claude. Those trees have his feathery but firm touch ; and the whole distribution of light and shade is his ! Our Flemish painters all studied in the great school of Nature, and Hobbima most of all."

"*Madame a raison !*" said the young Bru-

geois. It is to that circumstance our school owes its immortal freshness, . . .”

“The absence of all mannerism,” said the lady, “and the truth that belongs to all ages.”

“To what, then,” said Sir Frederick, “do you attribute the decline of your school?”

“To war, sir,” replied the young man: “the restless wars of France, Austria, and Prussia stopped their progress in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. For thirty years, music was thus stopped in Germany; war rendered music stationary in France, till Rossini and the new Italian school were permitted to revive the art: nor would Belgium have been compelled to borrow from other countries that divine art in which she once herself excelled, had she not been always involved in contentions in which *she* had no interest.”

“But you have had fifteen years of peace in Belgium,” said Sir Frederick.

“Fifteen years of discontent and brooding vengeance,” replied the young man, with fire. “The arts must have encouragement; genius must have its recompense. Genius, *qui marche à l’égal des souverains*, must still eat. But under

the Dutch government, *figurez-vous !* William considers the arts merely as an inferior branch of industry. Painting and music !—bah ! the Arcadia of William was a manufactory, and his Magnus Apollo *un bon gros fabricant* ; the clacking of looms was his music, and the workshops of Ghent his Olympus.”

There was a general laugh among the auditors, among whom there was not, it appeared, a single Orangeist or partisan of the Nassaus.

“ Yes,” said the blind gentleman, “ we Flemish are all born artists, I believe, if circumstances favoured our talents. When Guicciardini visited us in 1567, he observed, (I beg pardon for quoting our own translation,) ‘ *Les Belges sont les maîtres de la musique, qu’ils ont fait renaître, et qu’ils ont porté à un grand point de perfection. Ils naissent avec un génie heureux pour la cultiver.* ’ ”

“ Without that *génie*,” said Sir Frederick, insensibly interested in the discussion, “ a nation may buy artists, as England does, but she never will be musical. I am ashamed to say, that, until now, I was ignorant that the Belgians were a musical people.”

“ *Comment, monsieur !*” said the lady, brusquely. “ Do you not know that the founder of the present musical system was a Belgian, who added the seventh note, and divided the scale into octaves—Henri de Put ? And then there was our Rowland Lassus, of Mons : the Italians call him *Orlando di Lasso*. Then there was *Tinturier de Nivelles* ; besides Deprès of Antwerp, who invented counterpoint, in the sixteenth century. And, in modern times, have we not Méhul, Berriot, and the divine Grétry of Liege ?”

The Flemish lady then whispered something to the harpist, and she struck up ‘ *O Richard, O mon roi.*’

“ Bravo ! bravo !” was echoed on every side.

“ *La belle musique !*” said the blind gentleman, humming the air to the harp.

“ *Oui, oui,*” said the younger speaker. You knew Grétry, Monsieur Rodenbach ; and the amateurs of the day preferred him to every one. *Mais nous autres jeunes gens,* we prefer the *Brabançonne*. *Chantez-la, ma bonne amie.*”

The harpist struck a few chords, and then sung as follows :

Qui l'aurait cru ! de l'arbitraire
Consacrant les affreux projets,
Sur nous de l'airain militaire
Un prince a lancé les boulets.
C'en est fait ! Oui, Belges, tout change :
Avec Nassau plus d'indigne traité !
La mitraille a brisé l'Orange
Sur l'arbre de la liberté.

Et vous, objets de nobles larmes !
Braves, morts au feu des canons
Avant que la patrie en armes
Ait pu connaître, au moins, vos noms !
Sous l'humble terre où l'on vous range,
Dormez, martyrs ! bataillon indompté !
Dormez en paix, loin de l'Orange,
Sous l'arbre de la liberté !

The enthusiasm produced by this national hymn was a proof how far constitutional phlegm may yield to the excitement of circumstances. In the plaudits which followed, there was more of the mercurial temperament of the French, than of the supposed sobriety of the Flemish character.

It was remarkable that, during the performance, the Italian exile sat with his face buried

in his hands, and alone gave no outward token of sympathy with the cause. *He* was haply comparing the revolution of Belgium with the fruitless struggles for Italian liberty of which he was a victim. He had a brother in the dungeons of St. Angelo, and he was himself dead in law,—in poverty and in banishment. For Belgium, circumstance had done much; while every chance had turned against his own country. The blood of many of the best sons of Italy had stained her soil; while others, dispersed and lonely, brooded, like himself, beneath the chilly skies of the north, over the disappointment of their patriot hopes. How then could he sympathize where all was triumph, activity, and hope, and success!

The little bark was now passing through the *Franc de Bruges*, whose every inch of ground recalled the unsubdued spirit of the Flemings of the middle ages.

“It was here,” said the young Belgian, “that the tree of liberty was planted and nourished in the fourteenth century. When the Comtes de Flandres endeavoured to extend an unmixed despotism over the people, the cities, to

strengthen themselves, endeavoured to obtain a mastery over the surrounding country: but the population of the *Franc de Bruges* threw off the yoke of both, and obtained for it great privileges: it was ruled by its own magistrates, according to its own laws; and took a place among the *Etats de Flandres* as an independent power."

"Let us hope," said another passenger, "that the spirit of the ancient times is not extinct."

It was now very evident that the Flemings were desirous of impressing their English fellow-travellers with a conviction of the perfect success of their revolution and its consequences; and Sir Frederick Mottram was slowly yielding himself to a cause for which he had hitherto felt no interest, through the medium of his imagination. The arts were mixing themselves with his political opinions; Hobbima, and Grétry, and the *Brabançonne*, presented a neutral ground, where Fancy, like Archimedes, might fix her levers, to move the world of prejudice in which he had hitherto lived. He was beginning to feel for Belgium; and feeling is a powerful step to conviction.

On arriving at the port of Bruges, which is without the city, and a short distance from its gates, there was a general flutter and fuss. The acquaintanceship of the voyage was at an end; and self resumed the influence which it usually exerts in such situations. Each was busied in pursuit of his own objects; and boxes, bags, and carriages superseded every other consideration. Already had Fegan taken the command of a company of three *barrows*, engaged by him to take his two carpet-bags into the town; and he was haranguing the porters in his best English, respecting the rank and importance of his master, whose carriage, he said, was following him, when Sir Frederick prepared to use his own legs, and proceed on foot to his inn. He had, however, attracted the attention of the young Brugeois, who now approached him with offers of service; first recommending, and eventually conducting him to the Hôtel de Commerce, one of the best, cheapest, and perhaps most ancient hotels of the Flemish territory.

“ You will surely remain a day or two in our city, monsieur ?” he observed, as they walked forwards.

“ Is there anything to see in it ?” was the languid reply.

“ *S’il y a quelque chose à voir !*” said the young man, in an accent of surprise. “ There is our superb Hôtel de Ville ; and our *Prinsenhof*, the ancient palace of the Counts of Flanders. The room is still extant where Philip le Bel, the father of Charles the Fifth, was born. Then there are the church of Notre Dame, with the mausoleum of Charles le Téméraire and of Mary Duchess of Burgundy ; the Musée ; the Botanic Garden ; the Academy of Sculpture and Painting ; and, above all, the house where your Charles the Second resided, when he was our *Roi des Arbalétriers*. But, with your permission, I shall have the honour of waiting on you to-morrow. Unfortunately, I am engaged to a *concert d’harmonie*, given by our young amateurs this evening ; *ainsi, au plaisir*.”

He gave his card, on which was written — ‘ Mons. —, Docteur en Droit ;’ and then bowed off.

It was not till after a solitary, but sumptuous eight-o'clock dinner, to which the host of the Hôtel de Commerce gave the name of supper, that the weary, but not unsatisfied, English traveller remembered a card which he had picked up near the little port of the canal, and which he had thrown on the table of his room on arriving. It contained a slight but admirable sketch of the group on board, which had struck his own pictorial imagination ;—the melancholy Italian, the joyous Flemings, the placid English, and, distinguishable above all, his own fine figure and handsome head ! Notwithstanding the miniature size of the drawing, the expression of his countenance was preserved with a characteristic fidelity almost epigrammatic. The regular features were touched with morgue, and tinged with discontent ; and the figure was defined with a precision of symmetry and proportion, peculiar to the English toilet, and illustrative of the minute observations of the artist.

“ What a splendid talent ! ” he said, his eyes riveted upon his own resemblance. Both the

Italian exile and the Flemish lady had been occupied with drawing; but the *amour propre* of Sir Frederick at once assigned the sketch to the female artist. There was something of female tact in its attention to details; in the wooden waist, buskined ankle, short petticoat, and sticking-out elbows of Miss Susan Tyler; which, with the father's back, the brother's chubby cheek and gingerbread, were touched into the back-ground in lines of humorous caricature. Sir Frederick was desirous not again to meet the fair artist, lest he should be obliged to restore a work that was so perfect an illustration of his pleasant and amusing passage from Ostend to Bruges, and which included the best likeness of himself in miniature that ever was made, though he had sat to Isabey, and been enamelled by Bone.

CHAPTER X.

BRUGES.

FROM a deep and healthful slumber, such as the over-worked man of office never knew, Sir Frederick Mottram was suddenly awakened, on the morning after his arrival at Bruges, by sounds of an unusual and an astounding effect. The great bell of the church of St. Jaques, close to the Hôtel de Commerce, was tolling loud and perseveringly; while, within the walls of the court, shouts and peals of laughter were heard, mingled with what seemed a clashing of arms; which rendered it doubtful whether the untimely tumult proceeded from a sudden revolutionary movement, or was only consequent on the celebration of some domestic festivity, such as the Flemish Kermess, that frequent bane of the traveller's repose throughout all parts of the Low Countries.

Sir Frederick rose, threw open the window,

and beheld a ghastly figure, larger than life, stretched on the cross; its head bent down, its hair dishevelled, and its face covered with drops of blood. Preoccupied, and only half awake, it was some moments before he convinced himself that the frightfully awful image was no reality; that it was one only of those terrible representations, which a prostrating system of superstition had multiplied throughout the Low Countries, and which still remain, to mark the lingering of Spanish bigotry, and to demonstrate the strange inconsistency of man, even in his greatest efforts for reformation.

The spectacle, in his imagination, was profanely offensive. He turned away, and from another window, having a different aspect, he beheld a group of revellers advancing towards the house. It seemed a sort of bacchanalian rout, composed of both sexes, armed with every species of implement that a well-furnished *batterie de cuisine* could supply. A band of music followed in the train; while in front moved a tall, grotesque figure, bearing a gridiron, and crowned with gaudy flowers, whose grave but humorous countenance was the object of universal attention. This personage was Lawrence Fegan! For frolic or for row, Fegan, in virtue of his Irish temperament,

was alike prepared ; and ‘ equal to both and armed for either field,’ he might either have engaged himself in the out-burst of another four days ; or only taken the lead of the Belgian mob, in the mere spirit of fun and festivity. Shouting and yelling, the party continued its march, and entered into the back part of the spacious and straggling hotel.

Sir Frederick dressed himself with celerity ; and, hastening down stairs, found that the large and handsome kitchen, which he had admired, *en passant*, on the previous evening for its order and cleanliness, was now the scene of festive confusion. The votarists, who had been thus ‘ thanking the gods amiss,’ were in the act of arranging themselves round a profusely spread table, at the head of which sat Fegan, in his figure and costume a copy of the picture of *St. Lawrence* broiling on his own gridiron, which hung over the kitchen chimney.

Fegan saw, and rising respectfully, approached his master, pulling the forelock of his laurel-crowned brow, and scraping a bow.

“ What does all this mean ?” asked Sir Frederick.

“ It manes, plaze your honor,” said Fegan, half tipsy and wholly confused, “ that I am *St. Lawrence* on the gridiron. I hopes your ho-

nor is not displazed, sir, in regard of its being the faiste of ould St. Lawrence, glory be to his name ! And these are the raal Christhians, Sir Frederick ; and a fine people they are,—and the gridiron, sir, and it's being my own saint's day, and namesake ! Mrs. Cook here, with the curish dress and the gold bobs in her ears, has had the puliteness, Sir Frederick, to make me the king of the faiste, and had an iligant ball out in the *ramise* ; and Mrs. Cook did me the honor to lade off with me, in regard of my name being Lawrence Fegan, like the saint's, your honor ; and that's all, sir."

Sir Frederick saw it was in vain to make any comment upon Fegan's new vocation ; who was, besides, just then too full of the *spirit*, to resist his own happy Aristippean adaptation to the novel circumstances in which he was placed. Satisfied that he was himself in no immediate danger of fresh annoyances from his servant's genius for blunder, he returned to his chamber, leaving the happy Irishman *en possession*, to be pleased and to please, to the full bent of his festive propensities and saintly elevation.

Availing himself of that unusual advantage in the day of an Englishman of fashion, a long morning, he ordered coffee, and sat down to write letters of business, with their tedious and

wearisome, but necessary details. Such details, however, were a relief in the existing temper of his mind; and the only themes to which his morbid feelings could bear to recur. They were mere matters of fact; and, unconnected with passion, they revived no heart-sickening associations, they awakened no recollections pregnant with humiliation; and they refreshed no 'compunctious visitings of conscience.'

Horace Harvey and Mr. Harris, (the man of science, and the man of business) the early connexions of his youthful and better life, were at the moment the only persons in England with whom he wished, or could bear to correspond. It was a new indulgence to revive his almost forgotten habits of confidence with the former, to detail the progress of his returning health and reviving spirits: it was a necessary and peremptory duty to address to the latter his intentions relative to his property, to consult him on letting his house in London, on parting with his villa near Richmond, and to give orders for preparing Mottram Hall for his residence, whenever he might choose to return to England. It was necessary also to make arrangements for the immediate reception there of Lady Frances, while still doubtful as to the steps he should eventually take in relation to her conduct and

future position. Too indifferent for separation, too much irritated for reconciliation, he sought only for the present to mark his disapprobation, disgust, and contempt ; and a few cold lines, without date or place, were inclosed in his letter to his agent, to inform her of his decisions.

Yet amidst this dreary series of cold and flat realities, there fluttered an ideal and phantom-like reminiscence, which flung its dreamy influence over his more serious preoccupations : this related to the immediate and impelling cause of his almost insane flight from England. Who was the writer of those spellful lines, whose command he had almost involuntarily obeyed ; and what was the motive of her strange interference ?

Sir Frederick Mottram, like all of his temperament and cast, was a vain man : he was also a susceptible one. But political life, and a well-sustained ambition, that 'grew with what it fed on,' had saved him from the penalties of gallantry, to which his passionate and imaginative character might have driven him. An *engouement* for his wife's friend, Lady Montessor, and a caprice for his friend's flirt, Mrs. St. Leger, had acquitted him however, in the world's eye, from the imputation of a cold and stoical insensibility. But the private frailties of public men, if not

always of short endurance, are most frequently sunk in higher interests ; and the great political epic, more especially, of which Napoleon was the protagonist, admitted no pause for episodes of gallantry in the career of those whose lives were in any way bound in the last scenes of his declining power. Still, the elements of passion were latent in the temperament of the politician ; and imagination lent all its colouring to the romantic and singular incidents which had led to his abrupt departure from England.

The great movement of the age, the mighty struggle for conquest between past and present institutions, had produced in England, as elsewhere, an under-current of female agency, in which religion and politics, the church and the state, sought alike to sustain their power and to advance their interests. In a moment of such crisis, no instrument was so humble, no means so indirect, as to be considered unsusceptible of advantageous employment : and it is the peculiar advantage of woman's interference, that its sphere of action is all-pervading, and that its applicability commences there where all other agencies have no *prise* or lever to act upon.

Women had, accordingly, again become the ' nursing mothers of the church ; ' and had even

assumed the singular appellation of 'Church-women,* as in the ages of the Theresas and the Catharines. They had also become states-women, as in the times of the '*Traité des dames*;' and some, taking even a higher flight, had plunged into the depths of mathematical science, or brought their subtile minds and eloquent pens to the profoundest discussions of moral and political philosophy, and to the propagation of doctrines which they deemed essential to the happiness of their species.

The restless and reacting spirit of priestcraft and sectarianism was not slow to avail itself of this new contingency; and women were in various quarters actively encouraged to light up the dimmed fires of religious enthusiasm. The Jesuits had again their priestesses of the *Sacré Cœur*; the New-light Methodists, their female missionaries and class-leaders. English women were openly preaching, or privately proselytizing, all over the known world. They had their temples on the soil of Brama, and their congregations in the forests of America; while other Guyons and other Krudners were influencing the imaginations and passions of the higher classes of society at home. Was the *dévôte* who had lured Sir

* A name applied by the late Bishop of London, to Hannah More.

Frederick Mottram to the workhouse, and pursued him to his own chamber, a disciple of Ignatius Loyola, or a follower of 'the good Mrs. Medlicot,' the saint in fashion of the London circles, and the object of his favourite aversion, no less than the Princess of Schaffenhhausen? The idea, sudden and absurd, provoked and irritated him; and he arose to go forth and break through the chain of association, that was leading him back to scenes and persons which he had made such sacrifices to escape.

The morning was still fresh and early. Sir Frederick had already got through a world of business and an age of reverie; but he was still an hour in arrear of the rendezvous of his kind and self-appointed cicerone. He wandered forth, therefore, from his hotel, as chance directed.

The antique and sculptured character of Bruges (the cradle of those arts and dynasties by which barbarous Europe was first civilized) was well calculated to break through the workings of frivolous associations, and to replace the flutter of petty annoyances, the fastidious disturbances of an artificial and ultra refinement, by a reflected calm, and a borrowed repose. The exterior aspect of this town, the most perfect and picturesque monument of the great and free citizens of ancient Flanders, is in that respect irre-

sistible ; and in rambling on through the silent and solitary streets of the Flemish Florence, Sir Frederick felt his passion for the arts revive, and his mind resume something of the pleasurable and enthusiastic feeling with which he had, years ago, visited the long-buried glories of Pompeii.

Bruges, which had once held counters for the commerce of all Europe, and had formed a central point for the Lombard and Hanseatic cities, (where the Medici and the Strozzi met the merchants of England and Germany,) was now only trod by a few devotees on, their way to matins in the churches of St. Jaques and Notre Dame, or by two or three *Béguines*, in their singular habit, on the devious route of their multitudinous charities. As the English traveller stood in the Grande Place, admiring its magnificent and pictorial edifices, he rejoiced in the solitude which left him free to study the remains of an epoch so influential on the history of mankind.

The domestic architecture of the Belgian cities is unique, resembling neither that of France nor of Italy ; for the sturdy race of the Low Countries, living under other institutions, were actuated by other wants than those which

governed the victims of despotism in the rest of Europe. The Hôtel de Ville, that necessary dependence of a self-governed city, is, at Bruges, singularly attractive as an evidence of the miraculous perfection to which the arts had been carried at so early a period as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Its exquisite incrustations of sculptured figures, its profusion of ornaments, are valuable specimens of a branch of the arts, hitherto insufficiently studied by the antiquary. They form a series of bass-reliefs presenting curious portraits of historical characters, and preserving the costume of an almost forgotten population.

As Sir Frederick was busied in examining the almost endless details of this singular monument, a living figure moved towards him, that by its picturesque outline harmonized with the antique scene, and drew to itself his suspended attention. It was clothed in the mantle and hood of the Brugeois toilet, which might serve alike the purposes of devotion or of concealment. But besides something peculiar in the bearing of the wearer, sufficiently distinct to identify her as the artist of the *treckschuyt*, the singular and dumpy figure and white coif of the female who followed close upon her steps would have be-

trayed the fact. She carried a large clasped volume, which might either be the portfolio of the artist, or the breviary of the devotee.

Sir Frederick could not resist the desire of addressing the admirable designer of his own likeness. His graceful salutation, and gracious though reserved address, were scarcely acknowledged.

"I beg a thousand pardons," he said, "for this awkward manner of returning an object which I cannot in honesty retain, though it will be a sacrifice to resign it."

He took a card from his pocket.

"I picked this up on leaving the boat last night, and I believe I am correct in now assigning it to you as the accomplished artist who produced it."

The lady took the card without unhooding her head, and, placing it in the book carried by her attendant, replied in French, "Such sketches serve to embody some passing form or incident, which, at a future time, may enter into combinations of art; or I should press on you its acceptance."

"They serve also to evince," he said, "that true genius catches at a glance what study may labour in vain to master."

"They meet," said the lady, "more than

their desert, when they succeed in pleasing the originals they represent; but," she added, pleasantly, "*l'amour propre, qui aime les portraits*, is easily pleased, if it be but sufficiently . . ."

"Flattered," said Sir Frederick, filling up the momentary pause. "I frankly accept the application: I *was* flattered."

The lady was now moving on; but he made an effort to detain her, by inquiring who were the originals of the sculptured heads on the Hôtel de Ville, which presented so obvious an illustration of her remark.

"The Counts of Flanders," she replied. "Princes have more *amour propre* than other men, and it is that which makes the arts their debtors."

"And satire too," said Sir Frederick, much amused by the original reflections and pleasant manner of his fair interlocutor. "If princes were more perfect than the rest of the species, the philosophy of liberalism would have nothing 'to prate about,' nor ridicule to attack."

"Yes, it is some consolation," she said, "that absolute power should, like the sublime, border on the ridiculous. Look at these grim crowned heads, with their jewelled caps, their balls and sceptres, and other tangible toys of royal vanity; childish as they now appear,

they were appropriate emblems of power when there was no public opinion to sway men's minds; and these barbarous chiefs did right to adopt them. But fancy a living king, in these times of intellectual preeminence, with his crown and sceptre, perched on a high seat; or moving, like a king in a puppet-show, under his ponderous trappings, at the head of a dramatic procession! Can you imagine any pageant more absurd?"

"Humph! I have seen solemn ceremonies, but not exactly in the point of view in which you have placed them," he replied: "I have ever thought a coronation a most magnificent and imposing spectacle."

"I saw the coronation of Charles the Tenth at Rheims," said the lady; "but France will never see another such, nor Belgium neither. The '*Dio me lo da, guai a chi lo tocca*' times are over; kings will no more be permitted to snatch their crowns from heaven, but must in future be contented to receive them from the people, as ours has done. You will however find, sir, in Belgium, images of another power, in our public edifices (quite as well worthy of attention as that of royalty) the power of the nation."

"These barbarous ages, however," said Sir Frederick, accompanying the lady as she moved slowly onwards, "produced splendid specimens of human genius."

"Yes; there were then omnipotent energies at work, of which this most ancient and interesting city is a monument. But those antique images have another interest, as marking an epoch in the history of sculpture. This edifice is of the early part of the fourteenth century, when the arts began to escape from the exclusive service of the Church, and when princes began to enlist them in their own: and so we come back again to *l'amour propre, qui aime les portraits*. Flanders, at the period when this edifice was reared, was the cradle of the arts; she first opened schools for their cultivation. But the arts alone do not suffice to happiness; and at that very period men were burned at the stake for dogmas, and tortured for opinions, which are now despised and forgotten. Yet the Flemings were not a cruel race. Even the domestic dwellings of our honest burghers bear evidence to their possession of physical sensibility. Here is one of the oldest houses in Europe. Look at its façade."

They paused at the corner of the Rue St.

Amand, which opens from the Great Square. The lady appeared all in the arts; and Sir Frederick listened with equal enthusiasm.

“Here lived your Charles the Second, in his proper vocation of a gay worthless profligate, amusing and amused. It was one of the happiest epochs of his unprofitable adversity. Our good burghers of Bruges created him ‘*Roi du Serment de l’Arbalète* ;’ the only *serment*, perhaps, he never broke.”

Sir Frederick stood in apparent admiration before the curious old mansion; but he was, in fact, more occupied with the cicerone than with the objects she illustrated.

“If such things interest you,” she added—“if memorials of your ancient sovereigns are consecrated in your thoughts, you should visit the *Groschen-hausen-hof*, the palace of the Flemish Counts of that name, where one of them received your Edward the First. It joins the church of Notre Dame, where we are going, first to prayers, and then to finish a drawing of the tomb of the last Charles Duke of Burgundy.”

“To be conducted by such a guide,” said Sir Frederick, delighted by the offer, “is a great enhancement of the pleasure: none but an artist can well do the honours by the arts.”

“Yes,” she replied; “to understand the

arts thoroughly, one must have lived by them. That has been my case."

"It is a noble career," said Sir Frederick.

"That is according to the country in which it is pursued, or rather the state of society." She sighed—and there was a tone of deep melancholy in the accent in which she made the remark.—After a pause, she added—"These are not times in which power seeks assistance from the arts to seduce and deceive the senses. They are no longer instruments of church and state craft, and their encouragement depends only on individual taste. I am now going to work on a private order of a very liberal nature."

"And who," said Sir Frederick, eagerly, "is the privileged person who has the happiness to employ such original genius? To reward it is impossible."

"For the genius, *passe*; but the patroness is the Princess of Schaffenhauseu. She has employed me to make sketches of some of the principal monuments of Bruges and Ghent for her magnificent album."

Sir Frederick remained silent, till they arrived in front of the church of Notre Dame, close to which stands the old hotel to which the lady had alluded.

"How very curious!" he exclaimed: "what a precious monument of the domestic habits of Flemish antiquity!"

"Yes," said the artist, "the whole thing is a finely imaginative combination. But those marble steps, which English kings have trod, that threshold, where Flemish nobles received them, are at present passed only by the indigent and the humble. It is now the *Mont de Pitié*."

She passed on to the porch of the church, and raising the curtain spread before its entrance, held it up for a moment, as if to give effect to the fine view disclosed within. There was a striking distribution of light, as they entered, flashing down the vast nave from the lofty windows, which left the massy columns of the lateral aisles in depth of shadow, and produced that *chiaro oscuro*, so favourable to the solemn perspective of a place of worship. A few dark figures spotted the checkered pavement, kneeling with arms outstretched before the high altar, or prostrate beneath the image of the Virgin, which is ascribed to the genius of Michael Angelo. The sun played brightly upon the magnificent tomb of the last of the sovereigns of Burgundy: it called forth the lustre of the rich gilt and silvered bronze, and the

glowing tints of the enamel, with which this most superb monument is ornamented ; while it threw into stronger relief the florid sculpture with which it is overwrought ; contrasting it strikingly with the severe and imposing architecture of the church itself.

“ The tomb of Charles the Bold ? ” said the English virtuoso.

“ No, monsieur — of Charles the Rash,” she replied. “ There is all the difference imaginable between those epithets. The bold found empires, the rash lose them. Between Charles le Hardi and Charles le Téméraire, there is the same difference as between Charles le Sage and Charles X.”

“ I stand corrected,” replied Sir Frederick, smiling.

In a whispered voice she continued (for silence and solemnity prevailed) :—

“ This tomb is a monument of two great events, the degradation of art in Flanders, and the political retrogradation of the people of the Low Countries. Between the architecture of the fifteenth, and the sculpture of the sixteenth, what a difference ! This gorgeous monument has nothing of the severe grandeur of the preceding age.”

“ It is, however,” he replied, “ full of rich

variety and luxurious profusion of ornament ; and the effect of the whole is noble."

" Yes, it is noble,—royal ! It marks a careless expenditure of the labour of the people, for purposes of mere ostentation. As a work of art, it is far less beautiful than that little tribune of purest Gothic sculpture, which lies to the right of the high altar. Still, it is an interesting monument. In this mausoleum are mingled the ashes of the father and daughter, the last native sovereigns of the Low Countries, the last of the great Burgundian stock, Charles le Téméraire, and Mary Duchess of Burgundy."

" You call, then, the Burgundian princes, national ?"

" They were so in fact : the marriage of Philip le Hardi with Margaret Countess of Flanders, domiciliated the Dukes of Burgundy in the country ; and founded the only national dynasty Belgium ever knew, with the exception of the present. They were a fine race, those Burgundians ! *les Hardis ! les Bons ! les Bels !* and *les Téméraires* ; but it wore out, like other races ; and the last of its representatives, the fair Mary Duchess of Burgundy, by her marriage with the Archduke Maximilian, brought the curse of Austrian and Spanish government upon the great commonwealth of the Low

Countries. The son of this ill-fated match united in his person, as husband of the maniac Joan of Castile, the kingdom of Spain and the Empire; and his successor, Charles the Fifth, dying mad and a monk, bequeathed the fate of Flanders and of Europe to the atrocious monster Philip the Second."

"What an inference may be drawn from this brief story!" said Sir Frederick thoughtfully.

"Yes," she replied; "a moral applicable to all ranks: in plebeian, as in royal races, an infusion of *mauvais sang* is equally fatal. The philosophy of motherhood, sir, is not yet sufficiently developed. Ambition, more powerful than even passion, directs the choice, where pride of alliance points. Old blood, old names, with what advantage are they endowed over other old things?"

"Oh! none—none whatever," was the vehement reply.

"When the foolish and the fragile," she continued, "are taken for the sake of the conventional influences connected with them, to the outraging of nature, and the sacrifice of the best interests of the remotest descendants."

Sir Frederick only noticed the observation by a deep sigh. If it had not fallen from an utter

stranger, he would have deemed it a personal epigram.

"That 'Crucifixion,'" continued the artist, "has the air of Vandyke's school, and is thought to be his: but it is a poor picture. This 'Adoration of the Kings' is ascribed to Rubens."

"They are both bad," said Sir Frederick; "and when that is the case, of what consequence is it that the name of a great artist is affixed to the work?"

"Exactly," said the lady. "If you have any time to see pictures at Bruges, where there are so few worth seeing, visit the Church and Hospital of St. John, and see the works of Hemlink."

"Hemlink! I scarcely know the name!"

"So much of what one sees depends upon the person who serves as a guide; and you English have a conventional catalogue of the arts, beyond which you rarely look. However, see Hemlink. Have you no one in Bruges to conduct you?"

"Not one; I cannot always expect to stand so largely indebted to accident as on the present occasion."

"What! have you not the young Brugeois, the *Docteur en Droit*, who offered you his card last night? The Hospital is, however, open to strangers at one o'clock."

"Yes, I had forgotten that," said Sir Frederick, smiling; "and indeed everything else."

"I advise you to see the works of Hemlink," was the vague answer: "one o'clock is the best hour; the lights are then perfect."

At that moment, the organ pealed, the officiating priests entered; and the congregating of the devout, hurrying forward to the high altar, interrupted all further conversation. The artist and her companion were already kneeling on the steps; and the English protestant turned, as if unwilling to behold a mind so brilliant submitting to forms so prostrating. Still he lingered behind, as if his sole motive was the examination of the various monuments of art with which the church abounds. A richly-carved pulpit, a sculptured Virgin and Child, a Nativity by Holbein, and a curious piece of very ancient tapestry, alternately arrested his steps. The last, with its golden arabesques, and bees, butterflies, and flowers, showed that the department of the arts of which it was a specimen had been brought to great perfection in the earliest ages of Flemish greatness: its date was 1430. When Sir Frederick found himself again near the high altar, the lady and her attendant had disappeared. He was disappointed, he scarcely knew why.